



General Assembly

Sixtieth session

First Committee

9th meetingTuesday, 11 October 2005, 3 p.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Choi (Republic of Korea)

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m.

Agenda items 85 to 100 (continued)

Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman: In accordance with the programme of work and timetable, the Committee will continue with the second phase of its work — the thematic discussion on item subjects as well as the introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and related international security agenda items.

Once again, for this stage of our work there will be no formal list of speakers. Therefore, please inform the Secretariat of your plans to speak prior to the meeting, or request to speak directly from the floor.

Before continuing with our thematic discussion on the issue of nuclear weapons, I would like to give the floor to Mr. Tibor Tóth, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), whom I officially invited to be our guest speaker for today.

Mr. Tóth: As the new Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) it is a great honour for me to address the First Committee.

Over the next few weeks, issues will be debated that are essential to the future of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Preparatory Commission. I hope that my brief report will support the positive outcome of your important deliberations.

When the Treaty was adopted by the General Assembly on 10 December 1996, we were aware that its success would depend upon two crucial factors: its universality and its verifiability. On both points we have made substantial progress since then. As of today, 176 States have signed the CTBT and 125 have ratified it. These impressive numbers demonstrate the ever-growing commitment of the international community to the Treaty. Of the 44 States whose ratification is necessary for the entry into force of the Treaty, 33 have already ratified. The vote of confidence expressed in the large number of signatures and ratifications is a major source of motivation for all of us who are working on the verification system.

The most recent Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which was held here in New York from 21 to 23 September 2005, reconfirmed the commitment of the international community to the Treaty and developed an action plan to promote its entry into force. The large number of delegations and the high level of participation was proof of the undiminished relevance of a legally binding, universal, verifiable and total ban on nuclear test explosions to the security interests of the overwhelming majority of nations.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.



I would like to thank the Chairman of the Conference, Mr. Alexander Downer, the Foreign Minister of Australia, for successfully guiding the work of the Conference. I would also like to thank the Special Representative, my old friend Ambassador Jaap Ramaker, whose work is crucial for the article XIV process. Last but not least, the good cooperation between the Department for Disarmament Affairs and the Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) allowed for a smooth conference. I thank Ambassador Abe for that.

Since 1997 the Preparatory Commission has been working on ensuring that the verification system of the CTBT is credible, functional and cost-effective. We are now entering a crucial transition phase where close to two thirds of the system has been built. In the coming years the task of provisionally operating and maintaining the system will become more dominant. Continuous testing and evaluation of the verification system will prove to the remaining sceptics that the CTBT is equipped with a robust verification system capable of detecting nuclear test explosions and all other nuclear explosions everywhere, as mandated in the Treaty.

So far, 217 of the 321 monitoring stations provided for in the Treaty have been installed and substantially meet the Commission's specifications. Over the last two years alone 115 new stations were installed. The building programme is continuing at a sustained pace. Data from the established stations are flowing to the International Data Centre via our global communication infrastructure. In this nerve centre of the verification system the incoming data are collected, processed, analysed and transmitted to States for final analysis. Over three million data segments and products have been distributed to authorized users since 2000.

Over the last two years alone the data traffic between the monitoring stations, the International Data Centre and the 89 national data centres currently in operation has almost tripled from 5 to 14 gigabytes per day. This massive increase documents the improving capacity and growing interest of the national data centres to receive and use our data.

It is the unique feature of the CTBT verification system that it empowers each signatory State to make their own judgment about events based on the data and products provided by the organization. In this respect the Treaty enables States, regardless of their size and

wealth, to fully participate in the verification work and benefit from the wealth of data provided by the system. This includes civil and scientific applications. The potential has only begun to be explored.

In the wake of the tsunami catastrophe of December 2004, the Preparatory Commission decided to test the usefulness of International Monitoring System data in the context of a tsunami warning.

The PTS is working closely with international and national tsunami warning centres through the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in order to ascertain the potential contribution of our data for that humanitarian purpose.

I would like to take this opportunity to underline that the strengthening of the verification regime will be unthinkable without the political and financial commitment of States signatories and the expert talent and dedication of the experts working as delegates or staff members in the Provisional Technical Secretariat and in the national data centres.

Those activities are important accessories, not only accessories — to the political will of the international community to bring about the entry into force of the CTBT. The comprehensive ban on nuclear test explosions has been a dream for many decades. The political and strategic choices of States, together with scientific and technological advances, have brought us very close to a universal and verifiable regime. I hope that the work of the Committee will further strengthen that political will and create a dynamism in pursuing our common objective.

The Chairman: I thank Mr. Tóth for his statement. I am certain that it will add value to the discussions today.

As agreed, the Committee will now have an interactive discussion with our guest speaker through an informal question-and-answer session. I intend to suspend the meeting now so that we can continue the discussion in an informal mode.

The meeting was suspended at 3.15 p.m. and resumed at 3.30 p.m.

The Chairman: I shall now give the floor to delegations wishing to comment on the subject of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Loedel (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am taking the floor on behalf of the States members of the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay — and the associated States Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

As States that have given up the nuclear option and as parties to the world's first nuclear-weapons-free zone, we continue to forge a determined path towards maintaining the delicate balance between rights and obligations upon which the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) rests. Although those rights and obligations are well defined in the Treaty, currently it is evident that efforts are being made to reinterpret them. The countries of the expanded MERCOSUR cannot accept ideas or proposals that contradict both the spirit and the letter of the NPT. As the expanded MERCOSUR sees it, without a multilateral process moving towards transparent, verifiable, irreversible and complete nuclear disarmament, it will be impossible to avoid the dangers posed by nuclear proliferation.

Total prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons is the only way to guarantee that such weapons will not fall into the hands of terrorists. Strict observance of all obligations under the Treaty and of the commitments agreed upon at the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences are of crucial importance. In particular, we wish to reiterate the need to fully comply with the 13 practical steps agreed upon in the year 2000.

Along with nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, the third pillar upon which the NPT rests is the inalienable right of all States, envisaged in article IV, to conduct research in, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and to receive transfers of material, equipment and scientific and technological information for such purposes. Such cooperation must be accomplished under the terms of the Treaty and in respect for the balance between rights and obligations.

MERCOSUR and its associated States deeply regret the absence of results at the seventh Review Conference of the States Parties to the NPT. We call upon all Member States to take the indispensable political decisions to prepare, as of 2007 and with substantive debates, the next review conference. With solid credentials in the field of non-proliferation, our

countries reaffirm that only a systemic concept that includes the components of disarmament, verification, assistance and cooperation will guarantee the elimination of the nuclear threat.

Our subregion is the first whose members have become formal parties to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). That signals the historic commitment of our countries to perfecting the mechanisms and instruments of the non-proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

As is already known, the CTBT is an instrument of particular relevance in the field of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. As an integral part of the commitments that allowed the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995, the entry into force of the CTBT would free the world from nuclear tests, thus contributing to a systematic and progressive reduction in and the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, as well as to the prevention of and fight against nuclear proliferation.

We have achieved important steps in that direction. Today, the CTBT enjoys almost universal support, with 175 signatories, of which 125 have already ratified. We welcome efforts to identify measures to promote the entry into force of the Treaty, of which the article XIV conferences have represented important steps. In a year in which we have found ourselves particularly frustrated with the absence of results in the NPT Review Conference and with the silence of the recent High-level Plenary Meeting with regard to disarmament and non-proliferation, the final declaration of the recent Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Treaty reaffirmed our resolve in that regard and highlighted the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation to the international community.

We call upon all States included in annex 2 of the Treaty, in particular the two nuclear States and other States that remain outside the non-proliferation regime, urgently to take the necessary political decisions to join the international community in its efforts to eliminate nuclear testing once and for all. We invite the Provisional Technical Secretariat to continue searching, with the support of interested parties, for solutions to the technical difficulties that some countries face despite their political will to ratify the Treaty.

The respect in which MERCOSUR and its associated States hold the Treaty leads us to think it paradoxical that the International Monitoring System (IMS) may be implemented with no clear prospects for the entry into force of the Treaty. The IMS cannot function if the legal obligations to be monitored are not in force. The functioning of the IMS must not be accelerated on the basis of simple technical considerations, while the universal and non-discriminatory character of the Treaty that created it are not taken into account.

MERCOSUR and its associated States reaffirm their ongoing commitment to the objectives of the CTBT and express their strongest support for maintaining the moratorium on nuclear testing until the Treaty enters into force.

Mr. Park (Republic of Korea): This year will go down as one of the poorest harvests in the field of multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation. In addition to the already ailing Conference on Disarmament and Disarmament Commission, the successive failures of the Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in May and the world summit in September to produce a meaningful outcome attest to the gaping differences in positions and perceptions, particularly surrounding issues related to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, among key players and a group of countries. The First Committee this year is convened at that juncture, and thus far we find no grounds for hope that the issues relating to nuclear weapons will be handled with less controversy than before. However, controversy does not necessarily lead to pessimism; rather, my delegation is of the view that the international community is already saturated with a prevailing and common sense that we will emerge from the quagmire sooner rather than later.

First of all, the Republic of Korea welcomes the significant progress made thus far in reducing nuclear arsenals and the commitments to further reductions under the Moscow Treaty. Nevertheless, we expect further progress towards deeper cuts, taking note of the fact that the number of nuclear warheads in existing arsenals is roughly the same as when the NPT entered into force in 1970. Further agreements should be pursued to bring the largest arsenals down to much lower levels and limit research and development intended to add new nuclear weapons to existing arsenals.

At the heart of the turmoil on nuclear disarmament lies the gap between the record of nuclear-weapon States and the expectations of non-nuclear-weapon States. The fact is that disarmament progress has not matched the rapidly rising expectations of the post-cold-war era. In that regard, we believe that efforts to reduce the gap will enhance the moral authority and political legitimacy of nuclear-weapon States in strengthening non-proliferation norms.

Reaffirming the urgency of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), we call upon all States that have not yet ratified the Treaty, particularly those 11 States whose ratification is necessary for its entry into force, to do so without further delay. Meanwhile, pending the entry into force of the CTBT, it is imperative to maintain the moratorium on nuclear test explosions. Moreover, all States are strongly encouraged to continue their contributions to the early completion of the monitoring system of the CTBT.

As the next logical step in the wake of the adoption of the CTBT, we cannot overemphasize the importance of a fissile material cut-off treaty, not only as a guarantor of nuclear non-proliferation, but also as a precursor to nuclear disarmament. In light of the urgency of commencing substantive discussions on such a treaty, my delegation is willing to start negotiations based on any reasonable formula that can garner the widespread support of States members of the Conference on Disarmament. There should be no further delay in opening negotiations.

In the meantime, considering the pressing need to curb the production of fissile materials, we encourage all States with nuclear-weapons capabilities to voluntarily declare moratoriums on the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes. Ideally, those States are also encouraged to place all fissile materials no longer needed for military purposes under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) verification regime.

Furthermore, my delegation would welcome any reasonable initiative that would get the Conference on Disarmament back to work. In that regard, we appreciate the new initiatives by some of this year's Conference presidencies to introduce more serious and interactive discussions. That would be an interim measure that, I believe, could galvanize the

Conference, creating an atmosphere conducive to its original mandate for active negotiation. I believe that the First Committee should support the continuation next year of those constructive initiatives of the Conference presidencies in order not to leave the only negotiating body for multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation in perpetual disarray. As the Republic of Korea is to assume the second presidency next year, it will spare no effort to revitalize the Conference on Disarmament, in tandem with the close affiliation of other presidency States.

I would like briefly to draw the Committee's attention to the outcome of the fourth round of the six-party talks, held in Beijing last month, at which the six parties succeeded in adopting a joint statement setting out the principles and guidelines for the peaceful resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue.

First and foremost, we welcome the commitment by North Korea to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes and to return at an early date to the NPT and to IAEA safeguards. The six parties also reaffirmed that the goal of the six-party talks is the verifiable and peaceful denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and agreed that the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula should be observed and implemented.

My delegation earnestly hopes that the joint statement will lead to substantial progress not only on the resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue, but also towards the realization of enduring peace on the Korean peninsula and the consolidation of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

My Government highly appreciates the endeavours of all the other parties, particularly China, the host country of the talks. The Korean Government will continue to engage in diplomatic efforts for the ultimate settlement of the North Korean nuclear issue and for achieving permanent peace on the peninsula.

The pursuit of non-proliferation will work best when the causes of proliferation are adequately addressed. We should not overlook the fact that insecurity, real or perceived, is in many cases a key motive for the development of nuclear-weapons capabilities. The international community must redouble its efforts to alleviate those security concerns that have prevented certain States from joining the NPT and caused others to pursue nuclear-weapons capabilities clandestinely.

At the same time, we believe that nuclear-weapon States should provide strong and credible security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States that faithfully meet their NPT and other safeguards obligations. We also recognize the value of providing enhanced security assurances and other incentives to those States that voluntarily accept additional non-proliferation commitments beyond the parameters of the NPT.

Mr. Ri Jang Gon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): As we gather here to discuss the problems arising from nuclear weapons, my delegation wishes to share some thoughts.

There is no denying the fact that the existence and possible use of nuclear weapons pose the most serious threat to the survival of humankind. Sixty years have passed since the nuclear holocaust, yet there are no legally binding international arrangements to contain any possible use of nuclear weapons. Instead, nuclear arsenals continue to increase, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Let me ask representatives here to consider with a fair mind the nuclear-weapons programmes pursued by certain States. Who on Earth has large quantities of nuclear weapons and has even stationed them abroad? How many nuclear-weapon States continue to stick to nuclear doctrines based on the pre-emptive use of nuclear weapons, and how many have made commitments not to resort to first use of nuclear weapons in any circumstances? Nevertheless, some countries are raising their voices on behalf of non-proliferation only, glossing over the real danger looming over our heads due to the facts that I have just mentioned.

My delegation is of the view that we in this house have to look at the main purpose and objectives of non-proliferation pursued by certain States. We have to see the real objective of certain States, led by the super-Power, in pointing their fingers selectively at those small countries for their peaceful nuclear activities. How can the international community achieve non-proliferation while at the same time allowing some selected countries to keep large numbers of nuclear weapons ready to attack others at any given time?

It is now time to take practical measures to make the whole world free of nuclear weapons. The argument for non-proliferation should not be used as camouflage to keep nuclear weapons permanently. Before saying anything about non-proliferation, one

should talk about its root cause: nuclear weapons, the topic under discussion today. For the peace and security of the world, as well as for non-proliferation, the international community should continue to gear its efforts at concluding, as soon as possible, an internationally binding instrument to prohibit the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons, leading to their ultimate destruction.

My delegation urges all nuclear-weapon States to make their political decisions for the total elimination of nuclear weapons and, as a first step towards that, to commit themselves unconditionally, through internationally binding instruments, not to resort to first use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

Before concluding my remarks, let me talk about the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula from that perspective. As we have mentioned over and over again, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a small country under constant threat from the super-Power, the United States. Our nuclear weapons are not intended to threaten or to strike others. We have no intention of keeping them permanently. There will be no need for us to keep a single nuclear weapon once relations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States are normalized, bilateral confidence is built, and my country is no longer exposed to nuclear threat from the United States.

The most urgent requirement for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula is to put an immediate end to the United States nuclear threat and hostile policies towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, aimed at overthrowing the regime.

Mr. Anton V. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, we would like to express our deep condolences to the Government and the people of Pakistan in connection with the catastrophic earthquake, which resulted in many casualties. The Russian Federation immediately declared its readiness to provide humanitarian assistance in this connection.

The Russian Federation is committed to its obligations under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). At the same time, we believe that the full and complete elimination of nuclear weapons is possible only by gradual, step by step movement towards the final goal, without undue haste, on the basis of a comprehensive approach, with the participation of all nuclear States and, of course, at

the same time maintaining strategic stability and compliance with the principle of equal security for all.

We are meeting all the obligations we have assumed regarding nuclear weapons reduction. The process of reduction, a labour-intensive, technically complex and very costly activity, is moving forward successfully, consistently and without any delays. Overall, the stockpiles of nuclear weapons in Russia have been reduced by a factor of five since 1991. As of now, non-strategic nuclear weapons have been reduced by a factor of four. We have eliminated 1,328 launch pads for intercontinental ballistic missiles and for ballistic missiles on submarines; 2,670 missiles; 45 strategic nuclear submarines; and 66 heavy bombers.

In just the last five years, the Russian Federation has removed 357 delivery vehicles and 1,740 nuclear warheads from its strategic nuclear forces. In accordance with the provisions of the Moscow Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions, by the end of 2012 Russia and the United States of America will further reduce their strategic warheads by approximately a factor of three, as compared with the limits set for late 2001 under the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty. As Russian President Vladimir Putin has stated, Russia is ready to continue reducing its strategic nuclear arsenal to a level lower than that stipulated in the Moscow Treaty.

We attach particular importance to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). We welcome the work just described by Ambassador Tóth. The CTBT can serve to reliably block any qualitative improvement in nuclear weapons. The Treaty is also one of the most important components of the system of international security and prevention of the spread of weapons of mass destruction. We note with satisfaction that 176 States have now signed the CTBT and that, of those, 125 have ratified it. We welcome this weighty decision taken by those States. At the same time, we cannot but be concerned with regard to the prospects for the entry into force of this highly important treaty. We hope that the remaining 11 States on the so-called list of 44 will take the necessary steps to accede to the Treaty with all possible speed.

Our contribution to the irreversibility of nuclear disarmament also includes the implementation of a Russian-United States programme to process fuel for electric power stations. Thus far, 500 tons of highly

enriched uranium have been extracted from Russian nuclear weapons.

In September 2005, there was an important landmark in the implementation of the Highly Enriched Uranium Purchase Agreement, an 18 February 1993 agreement between the Governments of the Russian Federation and the United States of America on the use of highly enriched uranium extracted from nuclear weapons: 250 tons of highly enriched uranium, which is equivalent to tens of thousands of nuclear warheads, were processed into low-enriched uranium. This means that the halfway mark toward the final goal of the agreement, the elimination of 500 tons of highly enriched uranium by the year 2013, has now been reached.

Our steps in the field of nuclear disarmament are accompanied by structural changes in the nuclear weapons sector in Russia. Production capacity in the sector has been halved, as the previous capacity has been deemed excessive for defence purposes. Together with the United States of America, we are working to shut down Russian uranium graphite reactors producing weapons-grade plutonium; the materials produced there are not used for military purposes. Moreover, the production of uranium in our country for nuclear weapons purposes was halted long ago.

The Russian Federation supports the beginning of talks at the Conference on Disarmament on the preparation of a fissile material cut-off treaty. Nor would we would object to a consensus on the programme of work of the Conference, on the basis of the so-called five ambassadors proposal, which, among other things, provides for consideration of nuclear disarmament issues.

Russia is appropriately ensuring the technical security and the reliable storage of nuclear weapons. I recall that our nuclear weaponry in its entirety is contained at centralized storage sites, all of which are located within Russia. Russia has introduced a number of measures to prevent terrorist acts. There are regular, integrated safety tests of all nuclear and hazardous radiation sites, which also serve to ensure that those sites are ready to respond to any terrorist act.

In this way, the Russian Federation is demonstrating its will to move ahead decisively in terms of nuclear arms reduction and disarmament, and most important, is putting that decisiveness into action.

We call upon all other nuclear States to join in this process.

Those are only some of the fundamental aspects of Russia's position with regard to nuclear disarmament. I should like to recall that detailed information about the fulfilment of our obligations in reducing nuclear weapons was presented at the 2005 NPT Review Conference.

Now I should like to say one or two words about the results of that Conference. Despite the absence of any substantive recommendations to strengthen the NPT for the future, there is no reason to call the Conference a failure. We believe that very useful work was done. Clearly, a very wide range of opinions emerged during the Conference as to the fulfilment of obligations under the NPT. That is natural, as significant changes have occurred in recent years in the area of international security.

At the same time, some fundamental elements that unite all the parties to the Treaty were confirmed. No one said that the Treaty was out of date. Nobody raised the question of preparing any sort of document to supersede the NPT. Everyone underscored the viability of the Treaty and its value as a basis for the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The parties carried out an objective and balanced analysis of the Treaty in all its aspects. All participants confirmed their dedication to the strict implementation of their obligations and their support for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards regime was unambiguously endorsed as an important component of the peaceful use of nuclear energy and of respect for the non-proliferation regime. We welcome the granting of the Nobel Prize to IAEA Director General ElBaradei and express the hope that it will further strengthen the Agency's authority.

We believe that the new challenges to nuclear non-proliferation that have arisen in recent years will and must be eliminated as a result of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In the course of general discussion, we have discussed our approach with respect to the success of our six-party talks in Beijing and the adoption on 24 September by the IAEA Board of Governors of a resolution on the nuclear programme in Iran.

New challenges call for new solutions. We welcome the broad support offered to the Russian proposal on Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. All States must now work together to ensure the full implementation of those documents.

We welcome the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones throughout the world. We therefore support the decision taken by the States of Central Asia to create a nuclear-weapon-free zone there. We believe that the establishment of such a zone, on the basis of the Tashkent draft text on negotiations for a nuclear-weapon-free zone, drawn up in February, will be a significant step towards the strengthening of peace and stability in the region.

With regard to this session's draft resolutions on nuclear disarmament to be considered by the First Committee, Russia will base its decisions on the aforementioned positions. Our priorities are to make a due assessment of progress achieved in that field, the existing obligations of States and their implementation. We are prepared to support realistic and balanced proposals in that respect.

Mr. Løvald (Norway): The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is a cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. Norway regrets that the 2005 Review Conference of the States Parties failed to produce a substantive outcome. An important opportunity to further strengthen the NPT was lost.

It is also highly regrettable that the United Nations summit outcome document did not reflect the challenges posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Yet another opportunity was missed to enhance our common security. We were, however, encouraged by the broad support for our cross-regional initiative on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament in preparation for the high-level summit. Seven countries from different regions of the world submitted a ministerial declaration and specific text proposals for the summit outcome document. The initiative was well received and a large number of countries expressed support. Regrettably, the proposal did not command the required consensus.

Norway will take up the challenge laid out by the Secretary-General and will continue to seek consensus

and concrete results. We will do that together with Australia, Chile, Indonesia, Romania, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and all the other countries that have supported our efforts. It is now more important than ever to consolidate and strengthen our global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

We must overcome our disappointment over the setbacks in multilateral negotiations so far this year. We must continue to seek and to foster a new global consensus on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. There are a number of concrete steps that should be taken on an urgent basis.

We believe that an early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) would be crucial in that regard. It is alarming that we now seem further away from the Treaty's entry into force than we have in a very long time.

Countries that have not ratified that vital Treaty should do so without delay. We urge the nuclear-weapon States in particular to commit themselves to the CTBT in a legally binding way. Pending entry into force, we must do our utmost to further consolidate the existing test moratoriums. Those moratoriums have set a norm against all nuclear testing. In order to ensure credible verification, we must accelerate current efforts to complete the International Monitoring System.

It is high time that the Conference on Disarmament emerge from its long-standing impasse. We urgently need agreement on a programme of work for the Conference. A fissile material cut-off treaty should be our first priority. A cut-off treaty banning the future production of fissile materials for weapons purposes will be vital to our non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. It must also address the question of existing stocks, taking into account the Shannon compromise. Meanwhile, we urge all nuclear-weapon States to place their fissile material no longer required for military needs under the verification regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

All States should increase the transparency and security of their fissile material holdings. We need to see more substantial reductions in existing nuclear arsenals. Norway encourages the Russian Federation and the United States to undertake nuclear arms reductions beyond those provided for by the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty. In that respect, we underline the principles of transparency, irreversibility and verifiability.

Norway would like to congratulate the International Atomic Energy Agency and its Director General, Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, on having received this year's Nobel Peace Prize.

There is a growing fear that nuclear weapons might be given a more prominent and additional role in security policies. It is therefore more important than ever to strengthen mechanisms of multilateral arms control diplomacy. The IAEA has a clear mandate to deal with cases of non-compliance and to verify that NPT States honour their NPT obligations. The IAEA therefore plays a vital role in our global security regime.

The IAEA verification programme is essential for maintaining the confidence needed for the NPT to be credible. The Additional Protocol will give the IAEA a broader basis on which to draw conclusions as regards safeguards. Norway appreciates that an increasing number of countries are implementing the IAEA Additional Protocol. We believe that the Protocol, together with the IAEA comprehensive safeguards, should be considered the verification standard. All States should therefore sign, ratify and implement the Additional Protocol without delay. Further steps to enhance the effectiveness of the IAEA verification regime should also be supported.

Further, Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) must be implemented in full, assisted by the appropriate multilateral bodies. That is crucial in order to prevent nuclear material and technology from falling into the wrong hands. We call upon all States to adopt and enforce effective laws that prohibit non-State actors from pursuing weapons of mass destruction-related activities. Norway is ready to consider assisting States in fulfilling the obligations set out in resolution 1540 (2004).

Norway has signed the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, which was adopted earlier this year. The Convention should enter into force as soon as possible.

A proliferation-resistant nuclear fuel cycle is in the interest of all States. It will facilitate our right to benefit from nuclear energy and technology as stipulated by the NPT. Norway welcomes the recommendations by the IAEA Expert Group on Multilateral Approaches to the Nuclear Fuel Cycle. Those recommendations should inspire our efforts to achieve a mechanism under clear IAEA control,

whereby States are assured supplies of nuclear fuel, provided they refrain from developing the capacity to enrich uranium or reprocess plutonium. The IAEA must be given the legal, technical and political capacity to play such a role. It is also vital that such arrangements be of a voluntary nature and that they not exclude technical assistance and transfers. It may take time to achieve that. In the meantime, we call for a moratorium on the construction of facilities for sensitive technologies.

Curbing the use of highly enriched uranium is another measure to reduce the risk of nuclear proliferation. We should therefore set ourselves the long-term target of reaching agreement on a prohibition of civilian uses. In the meantime, Member States should commit themselves to converting civilian nuclear installations from highly enriched uranium to low-enriched uranium as soon as technically feasible.

In conclusion, we believe that general and complete disarmament is a global responsibility. We must continue practical, systematic and progressive efforts to advance nuclear disarmament globally towards our ultimate objective: a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Al-Zaabi (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): Permit me at the outset to express, on behalf of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates, my deepest condolences and sympathy to the countries stricken by the South Asian earthquake, which have suffered heavy losses in terms of both human lives and material damage.

Despite the major progress made over the past 60 years in the establishment of international disarmament arrangements, the arms race — in particular the nuclear arms race — continues to threaten international peace, security and stability. It must be stressed that, by clinging to their strategies weapons, the nuclear-weapon States encourage non-nuclear-weapon States to want to acquire or develop formal or informal nuclear programmes of their own. It also encourages the emergence of other threats and challenges involving these dangerous weapons and related prohibited materials and the possibility that they will fall into reckless and irresponsible hands.

We are deeply concerned and disappointed at the lack of adequate confidence-building measures among countries. That has blocked consensus on an agenda for the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, has

prevented the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and has precluded progress in implementing the outcomes of the Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The United Arab Emirates believes that maintaining regional and international peace, security and stability is a universal endeavour that must be shared by everyone, with the primary responsibility lying with the nuclear-weapon States. We therefore call on the nuclear-weapon States to enter into flexible and serious multilateral negotiations, motivated by the political resolve gradually to achieve the systematic, and total elimination of their nuclear arsenals within the specific timetable set forth in Article VI of the NPT.

In accordance with the commitments undertaken under the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions and the various arrangements and international treaties already established concerning the destruction of weapons of mass destruction, we must consider strengthening the work of the First Committee, and of the General Assembly in general, with a view to attaining the objectives agreed upon at the 1978 special session devoted to disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament in Geneva must break the impasse in which it finds itself, and all nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States must show the political will and flexibility to agree on an agenda for that body so that the goals of the NPT can be achieved. Moreover, the international community must respond to the calls for the establishment of an international, universal and unconditional instrument that would provide non-nuclear-weapon States with the security and non-threat guarantees that they need.

Beyond that, we must reaffirm the need for universality and comprehensiveness in disarmament treaties, particularly those covering nuclear weapons, such as the NPT. We call upon the three countries that are not yet parties to the Treaty to join it unconditionally and as soon as possible. We call upon States concerned to consistently fulfil their legal obligations and to respect and strengthen the mandate of the International Atomic Energy Agency and to meet their obligations in a transparent, fair and non-discriminatory manner. We must eliminate double standards in all national policies and bear in mind the principles of the Charter and international law and existing treaties.

In addition, we must prevent the non-nuclear-weapon States from trying to acquire nuclear weapons and arsenals. We must strive to create more nuclear-weapon-free zones, particularly in the Arabian (Gulf) and Middle East regions, in order to support efforts to achieve non-proliferation goals. Moreover, we must support the right of developing countries to acquire nuclear technology for exclusively peaceful civil purposes and activities.

Ms. Mourabit (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Permit me at the outset to express, on behalf of my delegation, our sincere condolences to the friends and countries of South-East Asia that were hard hit by the recent earthquake and to the delegation of Guatemala, whose country has had to deal with tragic floods. All those friendly delegations have our deepest sympathy and our fullest solidarity.

The importance of the role of the United Nations in the area of maintaining international peace and security is increasingly obvious and essential in this difficult international context characterized by the emergence of new threats and challenges to which the world Organization must respond. It is clear that strengthening the rule of law — particularly by honouring international commitments to implementing disarmament and non-proliferation treaties — is especially urgent today.

Ongoing difficulties are blocking the multilateral disarmament process. To be sure, the end of the bipolar world order made it possible to put an end to the balance of terror, but it could not create the hoped-for climate of peace and trust. Indeed, the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, linked in particular to the threat of their acquisition by terrorist groups, weighs heavily on international security. Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) was a response to that challenge.

The impasse in the Conference on Disarmament, the sole forum for negotiation and multilateral disarmament instruments, is disappointing. For the eighth consecutive year, the Conference was unable to commence substantive work because of a lack of consensus on its programme of work. But that deadlock must not deter us from continuing to explore ways and means — consensual, of course — to put it back on track.

It is regrettable that no progress has been made in the area of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

particularly with the failure to effect the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the failure to conclude an agreement on a fissile material cut-off treaty, the failure to adopt a verification protocol for the Biological Weapons Convention and the failure of the Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT.

My country, Morocco, remains concerned about the situation in the Middle East and regrets that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region is running into the opposition of a single country that has yet to become a party to the NPT and that refuses to submit its nuclear facilities to the comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

My country's commitment to general and complete disarmament and to nuclear non-proliferation stems from its firm conviction that international security heavily depends on giving pride of place to economic and social development for the benefit of the world's peoples.

Finally, we wish to recall the importance of the rapid entry into force of the CTBT and reiterate our support for the commencement of negotiations towards conclusion of a fissile material cut-off treaty.

Mrs. Gayatri (Indonesia): In 2000, all States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons agreed to a package of practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament. But what has happened five years later? The nuclear-weapon States have back-pedalled on that agreement. Even worse, one of them has said that nuclear disarmament no longer exists and is part of history.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing. Commitments and obligations to these issues should be implemented in a balanced manner, without harming either one. In this context, with regard to the obligations, undertakings and commitments of the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences, basically, in our view, the international community has done more to implement the nuclear non-proliferation provisions than those of nuclear disarmament.

There are some positive developments with regard to the implementation of non-proliferation provisions. The International Atomic Energy Agency

(IAEA), as the competent authority, has continued to carry out its responsibility under its Statute to verify and ensure compliance with Safeguards Agreements by States parties to the NPT undertaken in fulfilment of their obligations under article III.

The effectiveness of IAEA safeguards has been assessed and evaluated; this has led to the implementation of comprehensive safeguards agreements and of the Model Additional Protocol. There are only 37 States parties to the NPT that have not yet brought into force a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA; 102 States parties have signed additional protocols.

Regardless of its status, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has not been brought into compliance with its treaty obligations. Libya announced that it had given up its nuclear weapons aspiration and has since come into compliance. Over the past three years, the IAEA has been engaged with Iran to ensure its full compliance following the discovery of its undeclared enrichment facility.

In order to enhance cooperation and to seek solutions acceptable to all concerned in the field of non-proliferation issues, a number of initiatives have been taken, such as the Cooperative Threat Reduction programme, the Global Threat Reduction Initiative and Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

Meanwhile, however, there are some negative developments related to nuclear disarmament. About 30,000 nuclear weapons have been retained, many of which are on alert status, with the attendant risk of accidental or unauthorized use — which is undeniably a frightening possibility. Unilateral declarations of national security interests, based on the legitimization of nuclear weapons, in the security strategies or doctrines of some nuclear-weapon States will create another nuclear arms race and perpetuate the policy of nuclear deterrence.

There have been systematic attempts to de-link non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, which the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference held to be "mutually reinforcing" (NPT/CONF.2000/28 (Parts I and II), p. 18), with an exclusive focus on the former, thereby exacerbating discrimination and unsustainable double standards.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which was opened for signature and

ratification in 1996, has not yet entered into force. The longer this is delayed, the more likely it is that testing will resume and become a major setback in efforts to constrain the qualitative improvement of weapons and the development of new types of weapons.

The resumption of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty is yet to get off the ground, although it constitutes the next vital step in the multilateral disarmament agenda. Its conclusion has been frustrated by the imposition of untenable preconditions relating to verification.

The Moscow Treaty of 2002 contains no commitment either to destroy or to render unusable weapons that are no longer operationally deployed. Unfortunately, reductions in deployment and in operational status cannot be a substitute for irreversible cuts in and the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Obligations under the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty have had negative implications in terms of the development and deployment of anti-ballistic missile defence systems and the pursuit of advanced military technology capable of deployment in outer space.

The question of non-strategic nuclear weapons continues to be of concern, due to their portability and to the fact that they can be stationed in close proximity to areas of conflict. This means that they can readily be used in combat, and that there is a high probability of pre-delegation of authority to use them in the event of conflict or of their early pre-emptive unauthorized or accidental use.

In conclusion, although not legally binding, the 13 practical steps should be reaffirmed and be used as the best tool for measuring the efforts of nuclear-weapon States to make progress in the fulfilment of their article-VI obligations.

Mr. De Alba (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Mexico had an opportunity to address the issue of nuclear disarmament at some length during the general debate. That is why I now wish to take advantage of our interactive format to highlight just two or three aspects.

First of all, I reiterate the Mexican delegation's frustration at the lack of negotiating progress made at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Without question, we missed a valuable opportunity to make progress on issues that to our understanding are

priorities for all Member States. We also missed opportunities in negotiations in the context of the Disarmament Commission. As if that were not enough, the biggest chance was lost when our heads of State or Government could not agree on substantive language at the recent General Assembly summit.

These failures are compounded by a misinterpretation or a poor interpretation of the meaning of the political will of Member States and of consensus. I would like now to address that issue. I think political will is articulated by the majority, not the minority, of States. It is therefore difficult for me to listen to statements that talk about a lack of political will. I think that political will exists in this room: the majority has the political will to move forward. I also find it hard to understand the idea that consensus is a desirable objective, when we have seen how that concept is abused. The rules of procedure of the General Assembly do not include the word consensus. Consensus is a process that Member States have been developing with the intention of summoning collective will and forging commitments on basic issues. We must not lose sight of that fact. The idea of consensus was not to reach agreements based on the lowest common denominator. The intention was to use it to achieve the greatest possible backing for any particular initiative, always for the benefit of the majority. I do not think that that is what is happening. The idea of consensus is being abused, and that is hindering our work. The Conference on Disarmament is a case in point.

This year had witnessed a number of exercises in negotiation, including the Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, held in Tlatelolco, Mexico. That gathering showed that we are capable of going beyond lowest-common-denominator agreements, of making progress for the benefit of all of humankind and of negotiating substantive instruments and agreements, not just at the governmental level, but face-to-face and in cooperation with civil society. I believe that anybody who was involved in the Mexico Conference would have found that to be the case. It resulted in a solid document that will move the agenda forward and promote a level of cooperation and understanding among all States that have rejected the nuclear option.

Eliminating nuclear weapons is the political will of the majority, and we must not allow ourselves to be manipulated by some to believe that that goal is

unrealistic or impractical. Some countries have already begun to mobilize. We have already begun discussing a number of options during this First Committee session, because we believe that the status quo is unacceptable. We believe that we have options. We believe that, under the best of circumstances, we are open to considering options that could enable us to break with the status quo. The only thing that is unacceptable is the status quo. We must move forward with an agenda to eliminate these weapons, and, of course, to tackle other equally important disarmament tasks, in particular non-proliferation. We must not close off any option.

In convening the Tlatelolco Conference on nuclear-weapon-free zones, Mexico was provided with invaluable support. During this First Committee session, we must pick up on the contributions made in that context by Member States, by non-governmental organizations and, indeed, by Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, now a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, who honoured us with his presence in Tlatelolco. Delegations should be mindful of those contributions.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that as we work to develop alternative ways and means to advance our agenda we must be inclusive, transparent and democratic; we are not calling for confrontation. We will be engaging in an exercise of reflection that is essentially political — one clearly reflected in the addresses made by each of our heads of State or Government a few weeks ago in the General Assembly.

The Chairman: We will now proceed to the introduction of draft resolutions and decisions.

Mr. Hamidon (Malaysia): My delegation has the honour to introduce to the Committee a draft resolution entitled "Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*", which will be issued as document A/C.1/60/L.46.

The draft resolution has been sponsored by the following delegations: Algeria, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Qatar, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Singapore, the Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe. My delegation

expresses its gratitude to all the sponsors and to other delegations that will join in sponsoring the text.

My delegation and the other sponsors of the draft resolution would like to express their appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report relating to agenda item 97 (q), contained in document A/60/122. We have noted the observations contained therein. We thank the Member States that have submitted information pursuant to resolution 59/83.

The advisory opinion on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*, rendered by the International Court of Justice on 8 July 1996, remains a historic and resolute decision in the field of nuclear disarmament. The decision of the Court constitutes, and remains, an authoritative legal call to rid the world of nuclear weapons. The Court's unanimous conclusion that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective control, is again reaffirmed in operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution. The unanimous decision of the International Court of Justice, while being consistent with the solemn obligation of States parties under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), is not confined only to States parties to the NPT. Rather, it is, significantly, a universal declaration.

Operative paragraph 2 underlines the obligation of all States to conduct and successfully conclude negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament. The sponsors of the draft resolution consider that the decision by the International Court of Justice must be followed up by concrete actions by all States Members of the United Nations. Aside from retaining those important pronouncements, the text has the modifications necessary for technical updating and includes a new preambular paragraph, the thirteenth, which reads

"Expressing its regret over the failure of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to reach agreement on any substantive issues".

This year has been a disappointing one in the field of nuclear disarmament. Last May the States parties to the NPT failed to reach agreement on any substantive issues at the NPT Review Conference. Another major setback was the failure to reach any

agreement on disarmament and non-proliferation for the 2005 world summit. The Conference on Disarmament remains deadlocked, while the Disarmament Commission has again been unable to agree on an agenda this year. The global disarmament and non-proliferation framework is in flux. Nuclear-weapon States are continuing to modernize existing nuclear weapons, and large stockpiles of nuclear weapons remain in their arsenals. Sadly, several nuclear-weapon States have chosen disengagement, retrogression and unilateral measures, rather than multilateralism and multilaterally agreed solutions.

Those are some of the fundamental challenges, which, if left unchecked, could destabilize international peace and security, as well as increase the risk of new instances of the unilateral or pre-emptive use of force.

The sponsors feel compelled to recapitulate the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD I), which underscores the primacy of nuclear disarmament that remains valid today. That goal is far from being achieved. Member States agreed at SSOD I that nuclear weapons posed the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of human civilization. In that connection, we call on all Member States to commence negotiations leading to complete nuclear disarmament and to an unequivocal undertaking by nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. We urge all States to work closely and constructively towards the convening of SSOD IV. It is crucial that the international community create that opportunity to renew, revitalize and create a new milieu for the further advancement of the global nuclear disarmament process.

The challenge facing the international community in trying to realize a nuclear-weapon-free world has become more formidable than ever, requiring our full and unqualified commitment to the goals we set ourselves. The world has promulgated legal treaties banning the use, threat of use and production of other weapons of mass destruction. We have seen significant developments and steady progress in the past year relating to the Biological Weapons Convention, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and nuclear-weapon-free zones. Yet, the final goal of eliminating nuclear weapons remains elusive. We must remain committed to achieving that goal. We agree with the Secretary-General that "We must revitalize our multilateral frameworks ... to address the growing risk

of a cascade of proliferation" (A/59/2005, para. 85). We cannot allow the indefinite perpetuation of the possession of such weapons; nor can we allow the possessive obsession with such weapons to further undermine our goals. We cannot allow the remnants of the cold war to continue to haunt us.

Nuclear disarmament must remain a high priority issue on the global agenda and must not be sidelined or marginalized. We must address the issues confronting disarmament in a comprehensive, constructive and balanced manner. Practical steps as well as systematic and progressive efforts need to be implemented. The test before us is to find the consensus and political will to move forward, despite our diverging views and positions based on individual interests. Governments must support multilateral efforts that seek to bring all countries together to create a nuclear-free world — a multilateral effort to save mankind and the future of human civilization. The vitality of multilateralism and multilaterally agreed solutions in addressing disarmament and international security issues must be preserved and strengthened.

In submitting a draft resolution on this item for the consideration of Member States for the tenth consecutive year, my delegation and the other sponsors are confident that it will continue to receive the support of a large majority. We are confident that States that support multilateral negotiations will heed the views of the overwhelming majority inside and outside the General Assembly and seek to join us in our collective endeavour to attain the goal of the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Kurup (India): I have taken the floor to introduce two draft resolutions submitted by India under cluster I.

I have the honour, first, to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons", on behalf of its sponsors. The draft resolution, which will be issued as document A/C.1/60/L.54, underlines that the use of nuclear weapons poses the most serious threat to the survival of mankind.

The last Non-Aligned Summit, held in Kuala Lumpur in 2003, underscored the danger to humanity posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and of their possible use or threat of use. The threat of use of nuclear weapons by States and non-State actors will remain so long as certain States claim an exclusive

right to possess such weapons in perpetuity until they feel justified in using them, or threatening to do so. We believe that States should reorient their nuclear doctrines through a commitment to no-first-use and non-use of nuclear weapons, backed by a legally binding agreement to that effect. That should be more feasible today — when the major Powers are participating in more cooperative exchanges among themselves — than in 1982, when the idea was first mooted.

In its historic advisory opinion of 1996, the International Court of Justice made international humanitarian law applicable to the use of nuclear weapons. The Court expressed the conviction that a multilateral agreement prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons would strengthen international security and create a climate for negotiations leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons.

We must take decisive steps, collectively, to support a legally binding instrument prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons — as an interim measure until we reach agreement on a step-by-step process for the elimination of nuclear weapons. That will serve to diminish the salience of nuclear weapons in maintaining security and contribute to the changes in doctrines, policies, attitudes and institutions that are required to usher in a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world.

The operative part of the draft resolution reiterates the request to the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations in order to reach agreement on an international convention on prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. A positive vote on the draft resolution will be a vote by the international community in favour of a decisive step towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Now, I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution on "Reducing nuclear danger" on behalf of India and the other sponsors. The draft resolution, which will be issued as document A/C.1/60/L.52, offers modest and pragmatic proposals for the safety and security of mankind. It calls for a review of nuclear doctrines, as well as immediate steps to reduce the risk of unintentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons. The very real possibility of systems and components falling into the hands of non-State actors has aggravated current dangers. Several strategic experts have identified measures proposed in this draft

resolution as feasible in the present circumstances, including lowering the alert status of nuclear forces from their current hair-trigger posture.

In 1978 the entire membership of the United Nations agreed by consensus that nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of civilization. The international community also agreed that effective measures for nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war were of the highest priority. Now, more than a decade and a half since the end of the cold war, the concept of mutually assured destruction is universally considered untenable. The dictum that a nuclear war can never be won — and must never be fought — is now accepted as conventional wisdom. Measures for reducing nuclear dangers are therefore an essential prerequisite for safeguarding our collective security interests, pending nuclear disarmament. The draft resolution refers to the seven recommendations of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters of 2001 that would significantly reduce the risk of nuclear war, including promotion of dialogue on cooperative security, de-alerting nuclear weapons, review of nuclear doctrines, further reductions in tactical nuclear weapons, increased transparency, creation of a conducive climate for disarmament through educational and training programmes, and preparations for a major international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear danger.

A positive vote on the draft resolution will be a reaffirmation by the international community of the need to take decisive steps to reduce nuclear danger.

Ms. Darlow (New Zealand): I take the floor today to introduce our draft resolution on a nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas, which is being put forward jointly by Brazil and New Zealand and which will be issued as document A/C.1/60/L.12.

A powerful symbol of the renunciation of weapons of mass destruction by the international community is the reach and potential reach of nuclear-weapon-free zones over the landmasses of the globe. Nuclear-weapon-free zones can act as disarmament measures, providing an incentive for nuclear-armed or aspiring States to pull back from the nuclear option, as well as contributing to non-proliferation efforts. We welcomed Mexico's initiative to hold the First Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties

that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones in April. That provided a valuable opportunity to explore ways of strengthening communication and collaboration within and between zones. A nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere would facilitate coordination and cooperation among the respective nuclear-weapon-free zones in areas such as verification, compliance and disarmament.

Draft resolutions on this item have been adopted by overwhelming majorities in past years, and we hope that that will once again be the case. We understand that States in opposition to the text are concerned that their freedom of navigation on the high seas would be undermined by the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone encompassing the entire southern hemisphere. Let me take this opportunity to reiterate that the draft resolution specifically recognizes the relevant rights and obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Mr. Najafi (Islamic Republic of Iran): I am taking the floor today to introduce a draft decision and a new draft resolution.

First is draft decision A/C.1/60/L.5, entitled "Missiles". Egypt, Indonesia and Iran are the sponsors of the draft decision. Since the introduction of this item into the agenda of the General Assembly in 1999, increasing support has been given to addressing the issue of missiles in all its aspects within the framework of the United Nations.

The first Panel of Governmental Experts was able to adopt a report (A/57/229) — the very first such report in the history of the United Nations — in which the issue of missiles in all its aspects was addressed comprehensively. The success of the first Panel opened up the prospects for exploring further ways and means regarding this issue within the United Nations.

Unfortunately, the second Panel of Governmental Experts ended its work having fallen short of the success of the first Panel. The Secretary-General, in his report to the General Assembly (A/59/278), stated that, given the complexity of the issue at hand, no consensus was reached by the Panel on the preparation of a final report. That situation showed once again that dealing with the complex issue of missiles requires further preparation, with extensive organization, proper timing and intensified effort on the part of all of us.

Therefore, last year's resolution, resolution 59/67, which was supported by 119 countries and adopted by the General Assembly on 3 December 2004, concentrated on defining future steps aimed at addressing the issue of missiles at the United Nations. The resolution, in its operative paragraph 3, requested the establishment of a third panel of governmental experts in 2007 with a more specific mandate "to further explore further ways and means to address within the United Nations the issue of missiles in all its aspects, including identifying areas where consensus can be reached".

Paragraph 2 of the same resolution requested that in the meantime, a report be prepared by the Secretary-General, with the support of qualified consultants and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, for submission in 2006. The report would focus on identifying areas where consensus could be reached. We are of the belief that such a United Nations report will be an important in-depth study on the issue and, without committing States with regard to its findings, could be helpful to Member States. In particular, it could serve as useful input for a third panel of governmental experts.

On the basis of resolution 59/67, the Secretariat has been taking preparatory measures and the necessary budget has been allocated for the activities mandated in the resolution. Because no specific developments have occurred since the resolution's adoption last year, and in keeping with the General Assembly's recommendations on improving methods of work, the resolution's sponsors decided this year to present a draft decision instead of a draft resolution and only to request the inclusion of an item entitled "Missiles" in the provisional agenda of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly. We hope that delegations will be able to support the draft decision, as they have supported the relevant draft resolutions in previous years.

I would now like to introduce to the Committee, for the first time, a draft resolution entitled "Follow-up to the nuclear disarmament obligations agreed at the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons", which will be issued as document A/C.1/60/L.38.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the cornerstone of nuclear

disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects, was originally intended to be in force for 25 years. The 1995 NPT Conference extended the Treaty in a package of agreements and commitments, in particular the nuclear-weapon States' obligation of "systematic and progressive efforts to reduce nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goals of eliminating those weapons" (NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I), p. 11), and adopted a resolution on the Middle East.

As a follow-up to disarmament obligations, the 2000 NPT Review Conference agreed by consensus on 13 practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement article VI of the NPT and paragraphs 3 and 4 (c) of the 1995 decision on principles and objectives for nuclear proliferation and disarmament. However, 10 years after the indefinite extension of the Treaty and 35 years after the Treaty entered into force, the nuclear disarmament obligations have yet to be implemented. The international community has expressed on many occasions its concern about the lack of progress by the nuclear-weapon States in accomplishing the elimination of their nuclear arsenals with a view to nuclear disarmament. Serious concerns are also being expressed over the development of new types of nuclear weapons, in contravention of the undertakings provided by the nuclear-weapon States at the time of the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) that the Treaty would prevent the improvement of existing nuclear weapons and the development of new types of nuclear weapons.

The 2005 NPT Review Conference, which was supposed to review nuclear disarmament obligations, failed, owing mostly to attempts to undermine the

NPT's disarmament obligations, particularly the practical steps adopted at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. Traditionally, the General Assembly, after each NPT Review Conference, adopts a resolution in which it reacts to the results of the Conference. Given the grave concerns expressed during the General Assembly summit and the general debate by many delegations over the failure of the 2005 NPT Review Conference, the Islamic Republic of Iran is convinced that there is a need for the United Nations to pursue the implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations. As suggested by the President of Iran, one possible way is to "mandate an ad hoc committee to compile and submit a comprehensive report on possible practical mechanisms and strategies for complete [nuclear] disarmament" (A/60/PV.19, p. 7).

The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in line with the proposal of its President, thus has the honour to introduce a new draft resolution entitled, "Follow-up to nuclear disarmament obligations agreed in the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons". The text of the new draft resolution is self-explanatory and has mostly been taken from the consensus documents of the NPT Review Conferences. We plan to organize open-ended consultations on the draft resolution, and proposals for improving its text are welcome.

The Chairman: Allow me to remind all delegations once again that the deadline for submission of all draft resolutions is tomorrow, 12 October, at 6 p.m. Tomorrow afternoon we shall proceed with our thematic discussion on the subject of other weapons of mass destruction and outer space.

The meeting was adjourned at 5.10 p.m.



General Assembly

Sixtieth session

First Committee

10th meeting

Wednesday, 12 October 2005, 3 p.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Choi (Republic of Korea)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda items 85 to 105 (continued)

Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman: Before proceeding with our work, allow me to remind all delegations briefly that the deadline for submission of draft resolutions is today at 6 p.m. I would also like to stress that delegations should ensure that the content of their submissions is accurate, so that the documentation procedures can be carried out in a timely and efficient manner.

Let us now begin our thematic discussion on the subject of other weapons of mass destruction and outer space. As members will recall, we already heard the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Mr. Pfirter, on Monday, and we have no further guest speakers scheduled for this meeting. I will, therefore, give the floor to delegations wishing to make statements on today's thematic subjects.

Mr. Freeman (United Kingdom): I am speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU) and the acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania. The candidate countries Turkey and Croatia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and

potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro, and the European Free Trade Association country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

As we set out in our general statement, the EU supports and promotes the universal ratification of and adherence to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC). These treaties have an essential role in countering the threat of chemical and biological weapons, and, together with other key multilateral agreements, provide a basis for the international community's disarmament and non-proliferation efforts, which contribute to international confidence, stability and peace, including the fight against terrorism.

We, therefore, take this opportunity to urge States who are not parties to them to adhere to these treaties and join the mainstream. The EU will continue, in its relations with third countries, to stress the importance of these treaties and promote universal adherence. And we will continue to urge all those States who are parties to the treaties to take all necessary steps to implement their obligations under both these treaties and United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), including in relation to enacting penal legislation. The EU stands ready to assist when requested to do so.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.



The Union is continuing to pursue its Strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which was adopted in December 2003. Since then, we have identified concrete actions aimed at promoting and reinforcing the CWC and the BTWC. We will continue to seek practical ways to pursue the implementation of this Strategy. We are also committed to implementing the EU's Common Position on the universalization and reinforcement of multilateral agreements in the field of weapons of mass destruction and means of delivery.

The European Union believes that the control of emerging technology will continue to be an issue of considerable concern in the area of chemical and biological weapons. The potential for illicit use of such technologies has been specifically mentioned in scientific literature and highlights the need to monitor technological developments, in respect of emerging processes and related equipment, with potential use in chemical and biological weapons programmes. We intend to be active in this area.

The EU underlines the relevance also of the Group of Eight (G-8) Partnership Initiatives, including the employment of weapons scientists, for the weapons of mass destruction (WMD) disarmament and non-proliferation process.

The EU acknowledges the progress made towards the universalization of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), a unique disarmament and non-proliferation instrument. We are equally supportive of the organization that is ensuring the implementation of the CWC and of compliance with its demands, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). In November 2004, EU member States agreed on a Joint Action in support of the activities of the OPCW. This is currently being implemented. It is providing financial support to the Organisation in the areas of universality, national implementation and international cooperation in the field of chemical activities. We hope to renew this successful Joint Action and provide further financial support for the OPCW's activities in 2006.

The European Union believes that the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention must be strictly applied. One of the most important features of the Convention is the obligation for possessors of chemical weapons to destroy their stockpiles by specified deadlines. We continue to urge the possessors to take

every possible step to meet these deadlines. In supporting this aim, the European Union has provided assistance to Russia.

The European Union believes that verification and, in particular, the mechanism of challenge inspections, is an essential means of deterring non-compliance with the Convention and increasing transparency, confidence and international security. We are, therefore, promoting the instrument of challenge inspection and, to that end, we have agreed on an EU Plan of Action, which was shared with States parties at the end of 2004. We encourage other States parties to participate actively in this exercise. Furthermore, in that context, we believe that the Technical Secretariat must be well prepared and equipped to conduct a challenge inspection, and we support the efforts being made by it to maintain readiness.

The Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) is now 30 years old. It remains as relevant today as ever and is the cornerstone of our efforts to prevent biological agents and toxins from being developed as weapons. Since 2002, we have been engaged in a very useful follow-up process. It has led us to address, in a successful manner, the issues of the adoption of necessary national measures to implement the prohibitions set forth in the Convention, including the enactment of national legislation; national mechanisms to establish and maintain the security and oversight of pathogenic micro-organisms and toxins; the enhancement of international capabilities for responding to, investigating and mitigating the effects of the alleged use of biological or toxin weapons or suspicious outbreaks of disease; the strengthening and broadening of national and institutional efforts and existing mechanisms for the surveillance, detection, diagnosis and combating of infectious disease affecting humans, animals and plants; and, most recently, the content, promulgation and adoption of codes of conduct for scientists.

We intend to assess the efficiency of this intersessional process with a view to its further employment in the future after 2006. We intend to play an active role in the Review Conference scheduled for 2006. We believe that it is important that States parties agree on a substantive outcome at that Conference so as to strengthen the Convention and build a sound basis for future work. The European Union reaffirms its commitment to developing measures to verify compliance with the Convention.

To implement its strategy against the proliferation of WMDs in the field of biological weapons, the European Union is focusing on practical measures — in particular universality and national implementation — with the aim of agreeing on a joint action. We also believe that the annual exchange on confidence-building measures is important and needs to be revitalized. We are working internally to improve our own record in that regard.

The European Union continues to support the Secretary-General's mechanism to investigate the alleged use of chemical, biological and toxin weapons, endorsed at the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly, in 1990. EU member States will consider and volunteer expertise to the Secretary-General to help update the lists of experts and laboratories that he may call upon for an investigation. Furthermore, we believe that the mechanism — which is now 15 years old — needs to be reviewed and updated so that it can take advantage of the progress of science and investigation in the intervening years and support efforts to make progress in that regard.

In addressing the problem of ballistic missiles capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction, the EU supports the Hague Code of Conduct, which, since its inception in November 2002, has become an important transparency and confidence-building instrument and a practical contribution against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We are deeply convinced that the Hague Code of Conduct constitutes one of the most concrete initiatives in the fight against the proliferation of ballistic missiles. That includes the right of every State to reap the benefits of the peaceful uses of space. One hundred twenty-one countries have now subscribed to the Code, and more countries are seriously considering taking that step soon. It is an initial but essential step to effectively address the problem of missile proliferation from a multilateral global perspective without precluding other initiatives or, in the longer term, more comprehensive approaches.

Mr. Masood Khan (Pakistan): My brief intervention will be on the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC).

We welcome the report of the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Rogelio Pfrter, that the six possessors of

chemical weapons continue to destroy their declared stockpiles and that the process of securing stockpiles and verification of destruction is moving apace. We have also taken note of the Director-General's statement that the lion's share of the task lies ahead and that major challenges remain. It is a matter of concern that the destruction of chemical-weapons stockpiles by main possessors is falling behind schedule. Obviously, the pace of the verified destruction of declared stockpiles should be accelerated.

We must also work on reducing the risk of the proliferation of chemical weapons and of possible access to such weapons by non-State actors or terrorists. In that context, the speedy and complete destruction of chemical-weapon stockpiles is critical. The OPCW Director-General has rightly pointed out that the know-how to produce simple chemical weapons is widely available and that the financial and technical hurdles in that regard are much less problematic.

We commend the efforts being made with regard to the plan of action on the implementation of article-VII obligations. In that regard, practical difficulties and resource constraints faced by the developing countries must be factored in. The provision of assistance and technical support to States parties upon request will help to expedite implementation of the plan of action. Such implementation is an ongoing process based on a cooperative approach. We would welcome and encourage the allocation of appropriate resources from the regular budget of the OPCW, in addition to voluntary contributions. The chemical-weapons prohibition regime overseen by the OPCW is a manifestation of the success of multilateralism. That example can be replicated in other areas of disarmament and non-proliferation.

For its part, Pakistan has faithfully complied with all the provisions of the CWC and is committed to further strengthening the objectives and purposes of the Convention. We attach importance to universal adherence to the Convention by all States. Implementation of the CWC should be carried out in such a way that chemical and technological activities and capabilities of States parties not prohibited by the Convention are not adversely affected. International cooperation in economic and scientific fields should continue to be expanded.

Concerning the BTWC, we should not lose hope or abandon efforts to strengthen international cooperation to ensure compliance and verification. In fact, we should make renewed efforts that can help ensure compliance and verification by all Member States. We should also try to build bridges and develop collective strategies to prevent the acquisition or proliferation of biological weapons. A productive endeavour is under way to develop appropriate codes of conduct as well as self-discipline on the part of industry and scientific and medical establishments and institutions. In order to use the full potential of biosciences, we must act responsibly while preserving the space necessary for research and industrial applications.

We also need to develop a long-term perspective. We should untangle ourselves from past wrangles and look towards the 2006 Review Conference and five to 10 years beyond it. The pace of change in the biosciences is phenomenal. Therefore, we need a long-term perspective in order to develop an international paradigm that would allow the fullest cooperation among nations to prevent proliferation and to harness biosciences for the service of humanity.

Mr. Hu Xiaodi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to speak of the issue of outer space. At 9 a.m. Beijing time today, China successfully launched a manned spaceship: Shenzhou VI. China's scientific outer space flight testing and research is completely for peaceful purposes and is a contribution to scientific progress and peace for humankind. We would like to join our efforts with those of all the world's peoples to advance together in the peaceful use of outer space.

Like land, sea and air, outer space has become an inseparable part of human life. Progress and development in various fields of human society, including the economy, culture, technology and others, are closely linked with the peaceful use of outer space. Outer space systems play a vital role in many important areas, such as telecommunications, navigation, meteorology and remote sensing.

Especially in recent years, such natural disasters as tsunamis and typhoons have brought so much tragedy to humankind, and the international community has paid increasing attention to the role of outer space in catastrophe early warning systems, and has strengthened international cooperation in the exchange of information.

At the same time, history has shown that the development of science and technology, if not properly guided, can itself bring disaster to human beings. If used to seek military superiority or to wage war, advanced space technology will seriously endanger peace and security in outer space and jeopardize the happiness and welfare of mankind. Unfortunately, some trends in outer space indicate that such a possibility exists. Currently, certain concepts and theories of warfare, such as those calling for control over or occupation of outer space, are being codified. Research and development for space weapons is also being carried out. Thus, the danger of the weaponization of outer space is becoming ever more imminent.

Outer space is the common heritage of all mankind. Space assets should be used to promote rather than undermine the peace, welfare and development of the world. It is both the right and the obligation of all countries to ensure the peaceful use of outer space and to prevent the weaponization of, and an arms race in, outer space. We must not wait until outer space weapons are developed and begin to cause damage. It would be too late if one country takes the lead in introducing weapons into outer space, with other States following suit. It is urgent that everything necessary be done to prevent the proliferation of space weapons. The key is to take preventive measures. Otherwise, the right to the peaceful use of outer space and the safety of outer space assets will be put in jeopardy.

Over the years, the international community has endeavoured on many fronts to prevent the weaponization of, and an arms race in, outer space. The Conference on Disarmament at Geneva had established an ad hoc committee to discuss outer space issues, and it functioned for 10 years, from 1985 to 1994. For many consecutive years, the General Assembly has overwhelmingly adopted a resolution on prevention of an arms race in outer space. Many Governments, civil society groups and academic institutes have put forward numerous constructive proposals. We appreciate those efforts, and we appeal to all countries to join the process in order to contribute to the security of outer space.

The Chinese delegation is of the view that, as the body mandated by the United Nations to take charge of negotiations on disarmament and arms control treaties, the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva is the best

venue for negotiating and concluding a legal instrument to prevent the weaponization of, and an arms race in, outer space. We urge the Conference to start substantive work at an early date.

In 2002, China and Russia, along with Belarus, Indonesia, Syria, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe submitted to the Conference on Disarmament a working paper entitled "Possible elements for a future international legal agreement on the prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space, the threat or use of force against outer space objects" (CD/1679). Subsequently, China and Russia jointly distributed three thematic non-papers. It is our hope that the Conference on Disarmament can use those documents as a basis for negotiating and concluding a new legal instrument on outer space.

Humankind has entered a new century. Peace, development and cooperation have become the trend of our times. Early conclusion of an international legal instrument to prevent the weaponization of, and an arms race in, outer space will contribute to the peaceful use of outer space, protect the safety of space assets, facilitate international cooperation in this field and enhance the common security of all countries. Let us join our efforts to maintain a peaceful and serene outer space, free of weapons and warfare.

Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): My statement will be on the theme of other weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). Russia calls for strengthening the multilateral foundations of WMD disarmament and non-proliferation on the basis of strict compliance with international agreements in that area. Together with the strengthening of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which we discussed yesterday, we attach great importance to the unconditional implementation by all States of their commitments under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC).

The need for effective action on the non-proliferation of chemical and biological weapons is so topical and urgent today because we live with the threat that such weapons might fall into the hands of terrorists: a new and exceedingly dangerous dimension of an old problem.

In our view, the main task of the CWC is eliminating current supplies of toxic substances by the deadlines that have been set. Here, we are fulfilling our

obligations. In 2002 we began to destroy Russian chemical weapons stocks at the Gorny facility. To date, we have eliminated approximately 1,000 metric tons of toxic substances. With a view to the timely implementation of the second phase of destruction, to be completed late 2005 or early 2006, we have commissioned destruction sites in Kambarka in the Udmurt Republic and at Maradykovsky in the Kirov region, and those facilities are now under construction. Based on the tremendous scale of our obligations we are increasing financing in the national budget for the federal chemical weapons destruction programme.

We would like to express our gratitude to all the countries that have given us financial assistance for the elimination of chemical arsenals. Russia is currently receiving financial and technical assistance from the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Italy, Poland, Switzerland, Canada, the Czech Republic, the European Union and New Zealand. With external assistance, we are now building three of the six projected chemical weapons destruction facilities. In that connection, we should note that today we face the serious problem of how to increase the effectiveness of that assistance. Since cooperation began, we have received only approximately 9 per cent of the assistance pledged. We would especially like to call attention to the major assistance that we will need for the period 2005-2007, when we will be actively constructing new destruction facilities.

To ensure the non-proliferation of chemical weapons, we believe that the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in The Hague needs to make the universality of the Convention a high priority. The number of parties to the Convention is growing steadily, as we heard from Mr. Pfirter, Director-General of the OPCW, in his statement to the Committee a few days ago. However, a number of States, including States from dangerous conflict zones, still remain outside the OPCW framework. Implementation of the OPCW action plan to universalize the Convention would play a significant role in increasing the number of States parties. We are convinced that the national implementation measures that all member States are bound to undertake are a necessary ingredient for ensuring the Treaty's stability. Implementing the action plan would also help us to revitalize work in this area.

We are prepared to provide assistance to other States to develop national legislation and to share our experiences. We are already cooperating in this area within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States. In addition, we welcome Poland's initiative to submit draft resolution A/C.1/60/L.31 in support of the Treaty.

In the context of non-proliferation and disarmament efforts, we have consistently called for the strengthening of the BTWC. Above all, we believe that the most effective way to achieve that aim would be to conclude a verification mechanism for the BTWC through a legally binding document or protocol that would make it possible to verify that all States parties are meeting their commitments under the Convention. That is still possible today. If consensus cannot be reached on the matter, we would then support the decision of the Fifth Review Conference of the States Parties to the BTWC, which called for convening annual meetings of States parties to the Convention and expert meetings to consider establishing a verification mechanism to assist compliance. We believe that such forums could be more successful, enabling us to adopt documents setting out general principles and approaches worked out in our discussions. We believe that in the meetings held from 2003 to 2005, we succeeded in establishing a good basis for the success of a sixth BTWC review conference, to be held in 2006.

Obviously, the universalization of the BTWC would be an important step towards preventing the spread of biological weapons. We call on those States that have not yet become parties to do so. We have consistently held that all States parties to the Convention should fully align their national legislation with its provisions. We support the draft resolution on the Convention (A/C.1/60/L.33) proposed by Hungary.

Over the past year, the international community, with the participation of the United Nations, was able to make progress in reducing the threat of proliferation and the danger of weapons falling into the hands of terrorists. First and foremost, we are referring to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). That resolution establishes a genuine basis for countering the black market in WMDs, which is one of the most likely channels through which terrorists can gain access to dangerous components for WMDs.

At the proper time, we shall make a statement on the disarmament aspects of the militarization of outer space.

Mr. Trezza (Italy): Italy fully supports and associates itself with the statement made by the delegation of the United Kingdom on behalf of the presidency of the European Union (EU). The EU presidency represents us so well and so fully that it is difficult for us to find anything we would like to add. That is why this is just the first time, after 10 days of proceedings, that I am making a statement in the First Committee.

I take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, upon your election. I know that you are exercising a supranational position right now, but let me recall the very friendly relationship between our two countries and Italy's full commitment to peace, stability and prosperity in the Korean peninsula.

The object of today's meeting is, *inter alia*, discussion of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) in general. This is, I believe, the appropriate time to make some remarks on WMDs and also some more general remarks. I wish to express our appreciation for the fact that an invitation was extended to the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Ambassador Pfirter, to address the Committee. Incidentally, Ambassador Pfirter visited Rome last week, where he participated in a ceremony and a seminar to mark the tenth anniversary of Italy's ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). I was also happy to listen to Ambassador Tibor Tóth, my former Hungarian colleague in Geneva, who is now the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) Organization. Other officials representing other disarmament forums will address the Committee in coming days.

I take this opportunity to underscore the importance we attach to the presence here in New York, at the appropriate time, of those who have institutional responsibilities in the implementation of the main disarmament and non-proliferation agreements. This is also the moment to highlight the fact that the main WMD treaties would be less meaningful if they lacked appropriate mechanisms for their implementation and possibly for their verification and compliance.

The nature of the existing mechanisms varies. Some conventions, such as the CWC, have a full organization to implement and verify their provisions. The same goes for the CTBT, which has a preparatory structure, pending the entry into force of the Treaty. We hope that this will become a permanent structure as soon as possible.

Other treaties are not so fortunate, if I may put it that way. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has to rely for its implementation on a five-yearly review process. We are in favour of strengthening that process. The NPT, however, can avail itself of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the verification of some of its commitments. It is unnecessary to stress yet again how much Italy, together with its EU partners, supports the IAEA safeguards agreements and the additional protocols. The fact that the Nobel Peace Prize was given this year to the IAEA and its Director General is an important recognition of the role played by the Agency worldwide.

The Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) too has to rely on a five-yearly review process, which we support, and we are working to ensure concrete outcomes for the annual meetings in preparation for the sixth Review Conference, to be held in 2006. We continue to support the principle of verification of the BTWC.

In conclusion, we wish to draw the attention of the First Committee to the vital importance of the follow-up and implementation processes of disarmament and non-proliferation engagements and to the necessity for the First Committee to be regularly briefed by the responsible officials on the evolution of this process.

As a final remark, let me add that we would be very happy if we could also have, in the not-too-distant future, a representative of a fissile material cut-off treaty follow-up structure brief us here in New York. This is not a reality yet, but the negotiation of such a treaty is a priority for us. We believe that it is feasible and are working to make it a reality as soon as possible.

Mr. Berry (Canada): The global community, both spacefaring and non-spacefaring nations, draws ever-increasing benefits from space assets. These benefits range from communications to search-and-rescue to navigation and weather forecasting capabilities

unimaginable to previous generations. Many would be shocked to discover the extent of the impact upon our daily lives if there were ever a large-scale interruption in satellite services. Space assets also play an important role in sustaining strategic stability. It would not be an exaggeration to say that all nations have a stake in protecting space assets and the benefits they provide.

In this light, Canada believes strongly that all nations also share a stake and a responsibility in ensuring that human actions do not jeopardize the current and future benefits offered to us by outer space. This is the common starting point from which Member States have built their endeavours in outer space and the point from which we should not sway. Canada has long advocated a ban on space-based weapons as a means to fulfilling a greater end, namely that of ensuring secure and sustainable access to and use of space for peaceful purposes. Space and the benefits it provides across a wide range of sectors represent an increasingly valuable resource that is too precious to leave unprotected by universally respected international law.

At the General Assembly in 2004, Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin said,

"What a tragedy it would be if space became one big weapons arsenal and the scene of a new arms race. In 1967, the United Nations agreed that weapons of mass destruction must not be based in space. The time has come to extend that ban to all weapons". (*A/59/PV.5, p. 32*)

A legal instrument to give effect to such a comprehensive ban should be negotiated without delay. A space weapons ban has of course long been a subject of discussion in the Conference on Disarmament, and Canada is committed to seeing the Conference re-establish an ad hoc committee to consider the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Canada thinks it is time for the international community to organize itself to ensure substantive multilateral consideration of this and other measures that could be taken to enhance outer space security. Progress in this regard will be facilitated by discussions that have already taken place.

Among the specific and detailed elements of a space weapons ban that have been explored here in the First Committee, in the Conference on Disarmament and elsewhere are such topics as definitions,

transparency, entry into force and verification. At the same time, Canada appreciates that measures other than a weaponization ban can also enhance space security and that the broad range of elements included in a space security concept can be addressed in many different forums. States might usefully, for example, wish to explore various approaches to confidence-building in this area. Constructive ideas that have been advanced include proposals for no-first-deployment pledges, codes of conduct for space activity and expanded commitments of non-interference with space-based national technical means, building on existing provisions found in accords such as the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. Such ideas seem to us worth considering. Proposals of this kind can also serve to foster a political-diplomatic environment of mutual confidence, one conducive to the negotiation of a multilateral agreement on prevention of an arms race in outer space, which, to be effective, would require support from key spacefaring nations, and especially those with a space launch capability.

Concrete steps have already been taken. Last October, the Russian Federation was the first country to pledge that it would not be the first to deploy weapons of any kind in space. A no-first-deployment pledge has since also been made by the participants in the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

If adopted widely, such declarations could help build confidence that no nation will station weapons in space. The Hague Code of Conduct also makes an important contribution to confidence-building, as its 122 subscribers agree to inform each other of space launches through pre-launch notifications. Another step available to all States is to accede to the Outer Space Treaty, and Canada encourages all those that have not yet done so to ratify the Treaty before its fortieth anniversary in 2007.

Canada would welcome the opportunity to share ideas and learn from others regarding how we, as nations and as members of the international community, can best ensure that space remains free for peaceful use in the future. On a national basis, there are many different ways to reinforce space security through the protection of space assets. For example, better protecting ground stations, introducing redundancy within satellite systems and building a replenishment capacity could all contribute in that regard.

Canada encourages enhanced cooperation among United Nations bodies, from a dialogue between the First and Fourth Committees on their space-related work, to exchanges between the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the Conference on Disarmament. Working more closely together would highlight the commonality of interests and the need for practical steps to prevent the weaponization of outer space.

We have a duty to ourselves and to future generations to ensure secure and sustainable access to and use of space for peaceful purposes. Given recent technological developments, the possibility that space weapons could be deployed looms ever closer. We can now therefore gain much by investing our energies in ensuring space security through developing a comprehensive multilateral architecture for a weapon-free outer space. In that way, we will be able to ensure that future generations are able, as we are today, to invest their energies not in developing and deploying space-based weapons but, rather, in exploring and using outer space for peaceful purposes, for the benefit and in the interests of all countries and of all humankind.

We share those views in a spirit of cooperation, and look forward to hearing the views of others.

Mr. Gala López (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Cuba continues firmly to call for the total elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons. Together with the Non-Aligned Movement, Cuba has always accorded the highest priority to nuclear disarmament. By contrast, certain States are continuing to bring pressure to bear to ensure that the international community's attention is focused increasingly on horizontal proliferation, to the detriment to nuclear disarmament, notwithstanding the fact that there are still tens of thousands of such weapons that jeopardize humankind's very existence.

We believe that the issue of proliferation in all its aspects must be resolved by political and diplomatic means, within the framework of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations. We reiterate that the only safe and effective way to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is to achieve their total elimination. The imposition of mechanisms that have a selective composition, lack transparency and function on the periphery of the United Nations and of international treaties is in no

way an adequate response to the phenomenon of international terrorism, including terrorism linked to the use of weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems or related materials.

Cuba is in favour of a strengthened international coalition of all States aimed at preventing the acquisition by terrorists of such weapons and their delivery systems. But such an effort must be carried out through international cooperation in the framework of the Organization and relevant international treaties. Such efforts must be consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter and international law.

The only way of guaranteeing that weapons of mass destruction do not fall into the hands of non-State actors is to ensure the prohibition and total elimination of all such weapons.

Yesterday, a number of points were made with regard to nuclear weapons, and I would like to make a few additional comments in that respect. In this context, we consider the development of new kinds of nuclear weapons, as well as the existence of strategic defence doctrines based on the possession and use of such weapons, to constitute a danger to international peace and security. We will be able to prevent the catastrophic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons as a result of the application of such doctrines — and correct the flaws in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) — only when we negotiate a multilateral convention that takes a comprehensive approach to disarmament, verification, assistance and cooperation with a view to attaining the objective of nuclear disarmament.

Commitments already entered into must be fully complied with, including the 13 practical steps agreed upon in 2000 at the sixth NPT Review Conference. At the seventh Review Conference, held this year, it became clear that certain nuclear Powers still lack the necessary political will to attain the objective of eliminating and forever prohibiting nuclear weapons. We cannot allow the foot-dragging to continue with regard to the launching of multilateral negotiations to conclude a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument by which the nuclear-weapon States would commit themselves not to threaten or use such weapons against States that do not possess them.

The holding in Mexico of the First Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones was a momentous

achievement. Cuba participated in an active and constructive manner both in the preparatory process for that important conference and during the deliberations.

That further demonstrates clearly that the Cuban Government is continuing to take concrete actions that demonstrate its firm commitment to multilateralism and its political will to comply with all of its obligations as a State party to the NPT and to the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

The most effective and sustainable way of strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention is through multilateral negotiations aimed at concluding a legally binding international instrument that allows for the verification of compliance with all its provisions. The tendency of certain developed countries to try to give the specialized agencies of the United Nations system functions and prerogatives in the area of verifying compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention that fall outside their mandates and functions is a cause for concern. We reiterate that primary responsibility in that field is incumbent upon States parties to the Convention and that the role to be played by the aforementioned organizations must be strictly confined to their respective mandates and spheres of competence.

Cuba continues to comply with its obligations as a State party to the Biological Weapons Convention. We have expeditiously provided information in response to the questionnaire on confidence-building measures related to the Convention.

With respect to the Chemical Weapons Convention, we feel that the consideration of compliance with its provisions must be guided by a comprehensive approach and that discussion must appropriately reflect issues related to the effective implementation of article XI on assistance and cooperation in the peaceful use of chemical agents, equipment and technology. Cuba is in full national compliance with the Action Plan on the Implementation of Article VII Obligations.

We reiterate that there must be concrete ways of providing assistance and cooperation to promote and effectuate the peaceful use of nuclear, chemical and biological agents, materials, technology and equipment, in particular in order to promote the social and economic development of developing countries.

In conclusion, I would point out that we warmly welcomed the statement made by the representative of China, and wish to congratulate his delegation in particular on the progress his country has made in the peaceful uses of outer space.

Mr. MacLachlan (Australia): Australia has long supported multilateral efforts to eliminate chemical and biological weapons and their production. Australia strongly supports the implementation and universalization of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, which we regard as fundamental to the international norms against those weapons.

Regrettably, the lesson of experience is that there are States that will either resist subscribing to those treaties or, having done so, will subvert their aims. For that reason, Australia also strongly supports practical initiatives and measures that reinforce the global norms against weapons of mass destruction, including chemical and biological weapons.

One important practical initiative, the Australia Group, marks its twentieth anniversary this year. Australia convened the first meeting of 15 nations in Brussels in response to Iraq's use of chemical weapons in its war with Iran. The 15 participants sought to prevent Saddam Hussein's Iraq from acquiring materials to build chemical weapons through otherwise legitimate commercial trade. Their response — harmonized national export controls — led to the Australia Group's birth.

At the Australia Group plenary held in Sydney earlier this year, participants focused on key issues, including terrorism. They agreed to significant measures to strengthen the Group. Of note were refinements to export control lists, including the addition of specific aerosol sprayers suitable for dispersal of biological agents. That was a direct response to terrorist interest in such agents and devices. The Group also agreed to continue engaging non-participants, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region, the western Balkans and key transshipment countries, to promote more robust export control standards, as required under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

Australia Group participants remained firmly committed to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. Their efforts to prevent the diversion of key chemicals,

biological agents and dual-use equipment to the production and proliferation of chemical and biological weapons reinforce those vital treaties, which are yet to achieve universal and fully effective implementation. Encouragingly, there is a growing acceptance among non-participants of Australia Group measures as an international benchmark for effective export control.

Australia is committed to remaining at the forefront in promoting the value and effectiveness of practical initiatives and measures, such as the Australia Group, the Proliferation Security Initiative and Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which reinforce international peace and security.

Ms. Fernando (Sri Lanka): During the general debate, my statement referred to Sri Lanka's long-abiding interest in the issues of outer space, grounded in our early active involvement in the negotiations in the United Nations of the laws of the sea and of outer space, defining the common heritage of humankind.

A number of treaties and agreements have been concluded over the years to protect assets in space, of which the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies remains the most important. At the time of its conclusion in the early years of space exploration, only a very few nations had the ability to have their own space programmes. The situation today is quite different, with over 130 countries involved in some space programme and about 30 having launch capability. In addition, space technologies are particularly important for developing countries, impacting on critical areas, such as communications, education, health and environment, food security and disaster management.

We all have a stake in space security today. As the fortieth anniversary of the signing of the Outer Space Treaty approaches, we would urge Member States to work towards universalizing the Treaty, which currently has 98 States parties. We need to continue to work together to examine present and future threats and to keep outer space peaceful, using the full potential of the multilateral forums of both the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I wish now to make a national statement on aspects of disarmament in outer space.

Preventing an arms race in outer space is a priority issue for the Russian Federation. It is a major and urgent problem. Once again this year, we have co-sponsored a draft resolution on preventing an arms race in outer space, the urgency of which is not only not abating, but is, on the contrary, increasing. The deployment of weapons in outer space is a major and genuine threat, the consequences of which would be multiple. Hopes to dominate outer space through the use of force are illusory. Such a desire would weaken, rather than strengthen, security for all States without exception.

Now is the time, while there is a practical opportunity to do so, to achieve security in space objects, which have a great impact on our daily lives, with the help of preventive, non-military means. One such means is to close the loopholes in current international space law in order to achieve a new and comprehensive international legal agreement that would hinder opportunities to deploy any type of weapon in space and to use or threaten force with respect to space objects.

We are sure that such an agreement on the non-weaponization of space would be in the interests of all and naturally, first and foremost, in the interests of States which have space programmes. There are now about 130 such States. For this reason, we have consistently advocated prompt agreement on a programme of work for the Conference on Disarmament, which has gained extensive experience on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. It could thus establish the relevant ad hoc committee of the Conference on Disarmament and launch work on the matter.

In the interests of achieving a consensus on the programme of work of the Conference on Disarmament, Russia has stated that it is willing not to raise objections to the well-known compromise initiatives to create an ad hoc committee on this subject with a mandate merely to discuss rather than to negotiate. We are hoping for similar steps by other States towards that goal. We understand that with the establishment of an ad hoc committee, we would need to convince those who still express reservations about the advisability of a new agreement on prevention of an arms race in outer space that it is in fact urgent, achievable, and in everyone's interest. We are prepared to do this. The major parameters of our proposed new agreement on the non-weaponization of space are laid

out in document CD/1679, and its specific aspects are described in more detail in three thematic reports prepared jointly by Russia and China and distributed at the Conference.

Nothing in our proposal is cast in stone. It is an invitation to all interested States to work together to come up with a document acceptable to all. Therefore, in our view, even with a discussion mandate, the ad hoc committee of the Conference on Disarmament would have interesting and intensive work to do, especially since we have heard many interesting ideas and proposals from Canada, France and a number of other States.

Sometimes we hear it said that States calling for developing a new international legal agreement on the non-weaponization of space are doing this for tactical purposes. Such claims do not comport with reality. Of course, the priority challenge of any State is to ensure its own security. If someone begins to deploy weapons in space, then of course we would be compelled to formulate an adequate response. However, creating space weapons is not a choice we make. We have already stated that neither today nor in the period to come does the Russian Federation have any plans to create or deploy any kind of weapons systems in outer space.

Russia has consistently adhered to the moratorium on testing of anti-satellite systems. In 2004, Russia said that it would not be the first to deploy any type of weapons in outer space. Weaponization of outer space is not, in our view, a foregone and unavoidable conclusion. We are completely capable of blocking deployment of weapons in outer space and guiding scientific and technological work and progress in creative directions. We were able to reach an agreement on banning chemical and biological weapons because we realized all of the disastrous consequences that their use would entail. We could also ban the deployment of weapons of mass destruction in outer space.

There are no weapons in space at present. We are not proposing to ban or in any way limit the functioning in space of systems which carry out important auxiliary military functions — such as communications, surveillance, navigation, geodesy and meteorology — including for defence purposes. These space systems can play a stabilizing role, for example as a means of verifying compliance with arms

reduction or limitation agreements or ensuring the secure functioning of armed forces in peacetime.

In other words, nothing that is in space now would come under the limitations or bans. We would like to ban deployment in space of any type of offensive weapon. We have already proposed specific definitions of the terms "deployment" and "weapons".

Ensuring the security of space would be furthered with the development of transparency and confidence-building measures in our space activities. Such measures, important in and of themselves, could complement norms of international space law now in force and could be used to verify compliance with current and new treaties. The range of confidence-building measures which could be used by States, including on a voluntary basis, is broad. In October 1993, the Secretary-General issued a thorough report (A/48/305) on research on adoption of confidence-building measures in outer space, which contained an analysis of the potential of confidence-building measures. Many of its proposals are still current today, although in the 12 years that have elapsed since the research was done the world has, of course, not stood still.

Russia has already proactively taken a number of confidence-building measures in space and we hope that our example will be followed by other States which have their own space programmes. In particular, our Ministry of Foreign Affairs website now contains timely information on upcoming launches of spacecraft and on their purpose. We are grateful to those States which commended Russia's statement that we would not be the first to deploy any type of weapons in space. If all the leading space States took a similar policy initiative, we would be able to contribute significantly to reducing the motivation to weaponize space.

Once again, we call on all States which have space potential to follow our example. We are pleased to draw attention to the fact that on 23 June 2005, the leaders of States parties to the Collective Security Treaty Organization — Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan — made an official statement to the effect that those States would not be the first to put any kind of weapons in space.

Of course, developing confidence-building measures in space is no replacement for work on a legally binding document to prevent weapons deployment in space. Nor, however, does one

contradict the other. Logically, the first complements the second, and they both pursue a single aim, that of helping ensure security in space in order to strengthen mutual trust and cooperation of States in outer space and to avoid an arms race in space.

In the next segment of the thematic discussion on disarmament aspects of outer space, when draft resolutions will be introduced, the Russian delegation intends to submit a draft resolution on measures to promote transparency and confidence-building in outer space.

Mr. Park In-Kook (Republic of Korea): I will deliver a very brief version of my statement. My delegation wishes to express its appreciation to the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons for his comprehensive briefing on his organization's achievements and development.

We are pleased to note that considerable progress has been made over the past year in implementing the objectives of the Convention, particularly regarding the enlargement of the membership and the destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles. However, the Convention is still far from universal. While we recognize the remarkable progress made in expanding the Convention's membership from 87 to 174 States parties since its entry into force in 1997, we are eager to see further expansion as rapidly as possible. I want to draw special attention to the fact that eight States have not yet signed or acceded to the Convention. My delegation fully supports any initiative by the OPCW to encourage those States to join the Convention.

Furthermore, universality is essential for coping with the increasing threat of the use of chemical weapons by terrorists and with other risks associated with the proliferation of dangerous chemical materials. In fact, in spite of the global efforts to fight terrorism, serious concerns remain about the potential nexus between terrorism and the illegal trade in hazardous chemical materials. In that regard, we appreciate the valuable contribution of the OPCW to implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), as well as its ongoing contribution to the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee.

The spectre of the threats posed by biological weapons is further cause for serious concern. We believe that the successful outcome of the upcoming Sixth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons

Convention, to be held in 2006, is vital to ensure the prevention and the prohibition of biological weapons, combat their proliferation and strengthen the Convention's framework, including various confidence-building measures.

No State party to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) should use the lack of a verification protocol as justification for failing to take effective national-level measures. It is necessary to take concrete steps to translate the prohibition of the BWC into action through all legislative, administrative and regulatory means. Moreover, in order for the BWC to be a truly viable instrument, an assessment of developments affecting its objectives and operation must be periodically carried out.

Mr. Loedel (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the countries members of the South American Common Market (MERCOSUR) — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay — and the associated States of Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela, with respect to the Biological Weapons Convention.

We reaffirm our countries' determined commitment to continue our progress towards attaining the objectives of the Convention, including international cooperation in the area of chemical activities for non-prohibited purposes.

MERCOSUR and its associated States value the work accomplished to date by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to attain the objectives of the Convention. Those efforts are reflected in the fact that 174 States have ratified the Convention. Also, we note that chemical arsenals have been reduced since the Convention's entry into force.

However, we reaffirm that the countries possessing chemical weapons or facilities for the production of such weapons have the obligation to destroy their arsenals and related facilities, in accordance with the deadlines established by the Convention. Any delay in destruction would impede the effective implementation of that international agreement.

MERCOSUR and its associated States call for intensified international cooperation with a view to achieving the economic and technological development of the States parties in the area of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the Convention,

including the international exchange of scientific and technological information, as well as of chemical substances, for purposes not prohibited under the Convention.

We believe that, with the support of States parties, cooperation must be intensified to develop legislation to establish the appropriate monitoring mechanisms. In that context, MERCOSUR and its associated States call on all States parties to the Convention to continue their efforts for effective implementation of the national measures envisaged in article VII of the Convention, in order to achieve greater cooperation among State parties and thus contribute to the achievement of joint action with the United Nations in fighting terrorism. Our subregion is of the view that the Convention is an effective tool in the fight against the proliferation of chemical weapons and dual-use substances and equipment. We reaffirm the need to improve border and customs controls to that end. In addition, we call for the reinforcement of the measures of assistance and protection against chemical weapons envisaged under article X of the Convention, in particular for cases of chemical attacks and accidents.

In conclusion, MERCOSUR and its associated States wish to place on record their satisfaction with the leadership of Ambassador Rogelio Pflirter, who is from our subregion and who, for the past four years, has held the office of Director-General of the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW.

The Chairman: There are no further requests for the floor on the issue of other weapons of mass destruction and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We shall now proceed to the introduction of draft resolutions and decisions.

Mr. Paturej (Poland): It is an honour and a pleasure to introduce, on behalf of the delegation of Poland, draft resolution A/C.1/60/L.31, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction".

The draft resolution on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) remains very timely this year. The text reflects the real progress made in the implementation of the CWC and in the work of the Organisation for the Prohibition of the Chemical Weapons (OPCW) at The Hague since the adoption of last year's resolution (*resolution 59/72*).

Therefore, the following new elements have been introduced in this year's draft resolution.

Special emphasis has been placed on maintaining the importance of the action plan on the implementation of article-VII obligations, or national implementation measures. The draft resolution welcomes the progress made in the implementation of the action plan. It urges States parties that have not fulfilled their obligations under article VII to do so without further delay. Moreover, the importance of the role of international cooperation and assistance has been confirmed. The draft resolution, for the first time, reaffirms the importance of article XI provisions relating to the economic and technological development of States parties and recalls that the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of those provisions will contribute to universality.

Emphasis is placed on the role of the full and effective implementation of all provisions of the Convention, including the Convention's provisions on national implementation and assistance and protection against chemical weapons in the global fight against terrorism. The draft resolution also notes the substantial contribution of the Technical Secretariat and the Director-General to the continued development and success of the Organization.

Our basic assumption and goal this year was to ensure, as in past years, consensus approval for the draft resolution. Consensus is crucial to provide unequivocal support for of the United Nations in the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. During extensive bilateral and two open-ended consultations attended by many delegations — about 50 in total — we were assured of support for this draft resolution and of readiness to join consensus on it.

Let me express gratitude to all the delegations that participated in the consultations. The consultations confirmed the existence of broad political support in all regions for the implementation of the Convention in its entirety. The friendly and businesslike atmosphere was another positive feature of the consultations. The draft resolution on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, agreed upon during the consultations and presented today, is a concrete expression of that support.

As in previous years, Poland will remain the sole sponsor of the draft resolution. This sole sponsorship, supported in the consultations, will assist in ensuring

regional and political balance and broad support for the draft resolution.

We consider that the text of the draft resolution on CWC implementation is well balanced. It provides unequivocal support for the United Nations in the full and effective implementation of all the provisions of the Convention and stresses the importance of universal adherence to it.

The delegation of Poland requests the adoption of draft resolution A.C.1/60/L.31, on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, without a vote.

Mr. Bródi (Hungary): As this is the first time that my delegation is taking the floor at this session, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the Committee. I assure you of my delegation's full support as you carry out your important task.

I have the honour to introduce on behalf of Hungary the draft resolution entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction" (A/C.1/60/L.33). The second preambular paragraph of the draft resolution notes with satisfaction that there are 155 States parties to the Convention, including all of the permanent members of the Security Council.

In the third preambular paragraph, the General Assembly bears in mind its call upon all States parties to the Convention to participate in the implementation of the recommendations of the Review Conferences, including the exchange of information and data agreed to in the Final Declaration of the Third Review Conference, and to provide such information and data in conformity with standardized procedure to the Secretary-General on an annual basis and no later than 15 April.

In its fourth preambular paragraph, the draft resolution welcomes the reaffirmation made in the Final Declaration of the Fourth Review Conference that under all circumstances the use of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons and their development, production and stockpiling are effectively prohibited under article I of the Convention.

In its fifth preambular paragraph, it recalls the decision reached at the Fifth Review Conference to hold three annual meetings of the States parties of one week's duration each year commencing in 2003 until

the Sixth Review Conference and to hold a two-week meeting of experts to prepare for each meeting of the States parties.

In its sixth preambular paragraph, it recalls also the decision reached at the Fifth Review Conference that the Sixth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention would be held in Geneva in 2006 and would be preceded by a preparatory committee.

Operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution notes with satisfaction the increase in the number of States parties to the Convention, reaffirms the call upon all signatory States that have not yet ratified the Convention to do so without delay, and calls upon those States that have not signed the Convention to become parties thereto at an early date, thus contributing to the achievement of universal adherence to the Convention.

In its operative paragraph 2, the draft resolution welcomes the information and data provided to date, and reiterates the General Assembly's call upon all States parties to the Convention to participate in the exchange of information and data agreed to in the Final Declaration of the Third Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

Operative paragraph 3 recalls the decision reached at the Fifth Review Conference to discuss and promote common understanding and effective action in 2003 on the two topics of the adoption of necessary national measures to implement the prohibitions set forth in the Convention, including the enactment of penal legislation, and national mechanisms to establish and maintain the security and oversight of pathogenic micro-organisms and toxins; in 2004 on the two topics of enhancing international capabilities for responding to, investigating and mitigating the effects of cases of alleged use of biological or toxin weapons or suspicious outbreaks of disease, and strengthening and broadening national and international institutional efforts and existing mechanisms for the surveillance, detection, diagnosis and combating of infectious diseases affecting humans, animals and plants; and in 2005 on the topic of the content, promulgation and adoption of codes of conduct for scientists; and calls upon the States parties to the Convention to participate in its implementation.

The new operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution welcomes the significant participation of the States parties at the meetings of States parties and

meetings of experts to date and the constructive and useful exchange of information achieved, and welcomes further the discussion and the promotion of common understanding and effective action on agreed topics.

Operative paragraph 5, which is also new, recalls the decision reached at the Fifth Review Conference that the Sixth Review Conference would consider the work of the meetings of States parties and meetings of experts and decide on any further action.

The draft resolution, in its new operative paragraph 6, notes that, in accordance with the decision reached at the Fifth Review Conference, the Sixth Review Conference will be held in Geneva in 2006 and the dates will be formally agreed by the preparatory committee for that Conference, which will be open to all States parties to the Convention and which will meet in Geneva during the week beginning 24 April 2006.

In its operative paragraph 7, the draft resolution requests the Secretary-General to continue to render the necessary assistance to the depositary Governments of the Convention and to provide such services as may be required for the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Review Conferences, including all necessary assistance to the annual meetings of the States parties and the meetings of experts, and to render the necessary assistance and provide such services as may be required for the Sixth Review Conference and the preparations for it.

Our expectation is that our draft resolution will generate broad consensus and be adopted without a vote, as has been the case in previous years.

Ms. Fernando (Sri Lanka): My delegation has the honour to introduce to the Committee a draft resolution entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" (A/C.1/60/L.27), sponsored by the following delegations: Algeria, Armenia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bhutan, Brunei, China, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Haiti, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kenya, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Syria, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Yemen and Zambia.

It is a matter of satisfaction to our delegations that the resolution has been gathering strength every year. Although the resolution is traditionally a non-aligned initiative, we have noted the increasing interest of other States, reflecting the unprecedented advances in space technology coming within the reach of an increasing number of developed and developing countries alike. As a result of globalization, space applications, such as in communications, broadcasting, meteorology, navigation, education and health, and environmental and crop management, have become crucial to the everyday functioning of modern society. At the same time, it is becoming increasingly clear that the line between the commercial and scientific uses of space technology and the military use of such technology is fast blurring, to the point that there is an urgent need today to ensure that space, the last frontier of humankind, is used only for non-offensive and non-belligerent purposes.

Our delegations hold the view that preventing an arms race in outer space is an easier task than attempting to control and decelerate such a race after it has begun. We cannot really afford an expensive competition in outer space while there remain so many other challenges before us, such as poverty, hunger, disease and other deprivation.

We have no doubt that the broad thrust and substance of the draft resolution reflect the thinking and wishes of people all over the world. Indeed, the unprecedented amazing photographs of recent space missions beamed across television screens around the world have once again rekindled in our hearts and minds the wonder of space exploration and strengthened popular resolve to keep the pristine world of space a peaceful arena for all humankind for all time.

The draft resolution refers to and affirms several previous multilateral agreements on this issue, including the tenth special session of the General Assembly, and urges further measures with a view to arriving at appropriate negotiations to prevent an arms race in outer space. The draft resolution also refers to the Conference on Disarmament, the single multilateral disarmament negotiation forum, as having the primary role in that connection, thus reflecting the hope expressed by many delegations during the general debate that the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space could be re-established with an appropriate mandate in 2006.

The draft resolution also urges States conducting activities in outer space to keep the Conference on Disarmament informed of the progress on bilateral and multilateral negotiations on this matter. We appreciate in that context the valuable initiatives taken by the Russian Federation, China and Canada to press for the recommencement of work on space security issues at the Conference.

Over the years, our resolution has indeed acquired the character of a "hardy perennial", in the wise words of Dag Hammarskjöld, thus establishing important norms. We the sponsors remain mindful that the text of the draft resolution should enjoy the widest possible support as a manifestation of the collective will of the international community. Therefore, this year, too, the text is similar to that of last year, with only technical updates. It is our hope that the States members of the First Committee will support the draft resolution as usual, with the widest, if not universal support.

Mr. Prasad (India): I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution on measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, in document A/C.1/60/L.51.

Resolutions on this theme, first adopted in 2002, have continued to command consensus support within both the First Committee and the General Assembly, and have also attracted a growing number of sponsors.

This year's draft resolution gives expression to the concerns of the international community and calls upon States Members of the United Nations to take measures aimed at preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. It underlines that the international response to the threat needs to be inclusive, multilateral and global. That approach has been widely endorsed by the Non-Aligned Movement, the G-8, the European Union and most other regional organizations.

Besides some technical updates, the draft resolution takes cognizance of the steps taken by States to implement Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). The new fifth preambular paragraph welcomes the adoption of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the new sixth preambular paragraph welcomes the adoption of amendments to strengthen the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials by the International Atomic Energy Agency. A new operative

paragraph 2 invites all Member States to consider signing and ratifying the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism to enable its early entry into force.

The draft resolution has continuing relevance as an unambiguous statement from a body that is universal and democratic — the General Assembly. The representative character of the General Assembly validates and reinforces the commitments we assume as Member States in regard to the objectives of the draft resolution.

I appeal to delegations of the First Committee to extend to this initiative an even wider measure of support than that expressed in the previous three years, through additional sponsorship of the draft resolution. That will demonstrate a larger measure of involvement of the United Nations membership on that vital issue.

Mr. Dapkiunas (Belarus): The delegation of Belarus has the honour to introduce a draft resolution entitled "Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons: report of the Conference on Disarmament", contained in document A/C.1/60/L.10.

The draft resolution is sponsored by Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Georgia, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Ukraine. The delegation of Belarus welcomes and appreciates the show of support for the document on the part of current and future sponsors.

The draft resolution continues the tradition of resolutions first initiated by Belarus under this agenda item 30 years ago. In its current form, the draft resolution has existed since 1996. Compared to General Assembly resolution 57/50, the current draft resolution contains technical updates in the second preambular paragraph and in operative paragraphs 4 and 6.

For many years, Belarus has devoted special attention to prohibiting the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction. That interest is not accidental. Ravaged throughout its history by a multitude of devastating wars, Belarus has always been a staunch advocate of peace and a worker for peace. The first country in the

world to renounce voluntarily the possession of its operational nuclear weapons, Belarus continues to be a committed — albeit somewhat lonely — proponent of the idea of a nuclear arms-free space in Eastern and Central Europe.

The notions of strengthening international peace and stability, reducing stockpiles of conventional weapons, and curbing the threat of weapons of mass destruction in all their forms — currently existing and theoretically possible in the future — have never been abstract for the people of Belarus and of like-minded countries.

We have always believed that efforts to eliminate existing weapons of mass destruction and to prevent the development of new types should be made in parallel. Apart from their direct destructive effects, new types of weapons of mass destruction could pose new and very serious risks. By creating an illusion of military supremacy, they could provoke their own use, which in turn might lead to the actual use of nuclear weapons.

After the end of the cold war, the international community agreed on the necessity to rule out the possibility of developing and manufacturing new types of weapons of mass destruction. Since 1990, resolutions on this item have therefore been adopted by the General Assembly without a vote.

We believe that a good way to counter the threat of the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destruction in the arsenals of States or non-State actors, including terrorists, is to create a machinery for initiating prompt multilateral response and prohibiting such types of weapons as soon as the risk of their appearance becomes imminent. The draft stipulates a specific procedure built into the existing disarmament mechanism to monitor the situation and trigger international action where required.

We heed the questioning of some Member States on how great is the need for the international community to focus on that problem. The delegation of Belarus insists that the problem and the draft resolution that puts it in the limelight remain just as relevant and topical as they were 30 years ago. This vital organizational safeguard is the least the international community can do to keep the problem of new types of weapons of mass destruction in responsible check. We call upon all Member States to give positive

consideration to the draft and we look forward to its traditional adoption without a vote.

Mr. Shein (Myanmar): I have the honour and privilege to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Nuclear disarmament", contained in document A/C.1/60/L.36, under agenda item 97 (m), on behalf of the following 41 sponsors: Algeria, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Dominican Republic, Ghana, Guinea, Haiti, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kenya, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, the Philippines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Suriname, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Uganda, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to all the sponsors. The draft resolution is the traditional one that we have submitted for the past 10 years, enjoying the sponsorship of countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and many countries of the Non-Aligned Movement.

I do not need to dwell at length on the content of the draft resolution, as the substance is essentially the same as that of previous years. I should only like to emphasize and reiterate that nuclear disarmament remains our highest priority in the area of arms control and disarmament.

Our disappointment at the failure of the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to yield fruitful results and at the omission from the outcome document of the September 2005 High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly of a section on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is clearly reflected in the draft resolution.

Once again, we call on the nuclear-weapon States to achieve the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. In this respect, we attach particular significance to the 13 practical steps for nuclear disarmament, as provided for in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, and we therefore call for the full and effective implementation of the 13 steps for nuclear disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States.

This draft resolution is the most comprehensive one on nuclear disarmament. It reflects the importance of multilateralism in the field of arms control and disarmament. It calls upon the nuclear-weapon States to stop immediately the qualitative improvement, development, production and stockpiling of nuclear warheads and their delivery systems. It urges the nuclear-weapon States, as an immediate measure, to de-alert and deactivate immediately their nuclear weapons and to take other concrete measures to further reduce the operational status of their nuclear weapon systems. The draft resolution also calls for the convening of an international conference on nuclear disarmament in all its aspects at an early date to identify and deal with concrete measures of disarmament.

I should like to invite the Member States to lend their overwhelming support, as before, by voting in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation is submitting a new draft resolution for consideration by the First Committee entitled "Measures to promote transparency and confidence-building in outer space", which will appear as document A/C.1/60/L.30.

The opening up and use of outer space is acquiring ever greater significance in the life of humanity. The benefits of the use of space assets are becoming an ever greater part of the heritage of every country, every people and every individual. In many spheres of activity, humankind already cannot make do without the opportunities provided to us by space technology. Even more important is the challenge of ensuring access by all countries to the results of space activity and protecting space assets.

Key to resolving these challenges are the following: knowledge of the situation in outer space; transparency of the space activities of States; preventing possible encroachments on the normal operation of spacecraft; and not using space as a sphere for the deployment of weapons or for armed struggle or as a potential theatre of military operations.

Transparency and to build confidence-building measures in space activities would help in the predictability of such activities. They could become a consolidating factor for all States in respect of space. They would help us achieve practical results in the establishment of a safe and responsible approach to the

further use of outer space and would objectively weaken the motivation for the weaponization of space.

The Russian Federation's draft resolution is based on the provisions of recent General Assembly resolutions on prevention of an arms race in space and builds on those resolutions. At its heart are also the ideas set out in resolution 45/55 B, entitled "Confidence-building measures in outer space", of 4 December 1990.

We view the draft resolution as an invitation to an enlightened conversation on a problem that directly involves the security and development interests of all States, whether or not they have space potential.

We would like to draw attention to the fact that, in the interest of achieving a consensus, we have tried as hard as possible to simplify our draft resolution, limiting ourselves to an invitation to Member States to inform the Secretary-General of their views on the advisability of further developing such measures.

It is our conviction that the draft resolution meets the interests of all States, without exception. It does not call for limitations on the legitimate right of States to self-defence. Our aim is to take into consideration the

opinions of all Member States, in the interest of maintaining international peace, security and stability.

We have circulated an advance text of our draft resolution to capitals, and tomorrow, 13 October, at 2 p.m., the delegation of the Russian Federation will hold an unofficial meeting for all interested delegations to consider our draft resolution.

We call on all delegations to support the Russian draft resolution. We expect that it will be adopted by consensus.

The Chairman: Before adjourning this meeting, I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Ms. Stoute (Secretary of the Committee): I wish to announce that delegations wishing to have their names appear in the final version of the document listing the membership of the First Committee should submit their lists of participants to the Secretariat by 19 October at the latest.

The Chairman: Tomorrow at 3 p.m. we will proceed with our thematic discussion on the subject of conventional weapons.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.



General Assembly

Sixtieth session

First Committee

11th meeting

Thursday, 13 October 2005, 3 p.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Choi (Republic of Korea)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda items 85 to 105 (continued)

Thematic discussion on item subjects and introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairman: We shall now proceed with our thematic discussion on the subject of conventional weapons. Since we have no guest speakers for this morning, I will give the floor to delegations wishing to make statements on that subject.

Mr. Lezona (Congo) (spoke in French): My delegation is pleased to address this meeting devoted to a subject that includes the question of small arms and light weapons.

The illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons poses a genuine threat to international peace and security, inter alia by fuelling conflict and destabilizing whole regions throughout world. Every year, small arms and light weapons take hundreds of human lives. Indeed, if we evaluate the long-term damage caused by this scourge of humanity over the long term, we would be justified in calling these arms weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, they are responsible for profoundly traumatizing and instilling fear in innocent civilian populations, victims of armed conflict. Those fears are furthered stoked by armed gangs, who carry out unspeakable acts of violence as they commit flagrant and serious human

rights violations such as rape, theft, torture and summary execution.

The Congolese Government is very concerned by the persistence of such evils in the Central African subregion. With a view to implementing the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eliminate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects, it is beginning implementation of its own programmes for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants. That is one of the main concerns of the Government, whose development programme is designed to curb the illicit circulation of more than 42,000 arms and to reintegrate more than 25,000 ex-combatants in order to consolidate the restored peace.

In that context, a Government-financed emergency programme for demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants was carried out in the Department of Pool from June to August 2005, costing a total of 250 million CFA francs. That has made it possible to collect and destroy 910 small arms and 3,682 items of ammunition, and to reintegrate 450 ex-combatants. My Government intends to continue its efforts by shortly launching disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes for ex-combatants with the support of the European Union, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and with help from other bilateral and multilateral partners.

Furthermore, we welcome the General Assembly's creation of an Open-ended Working Group

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

05-55177 (E)



that was able to negotiate and achieve consensus on a draft international instrument to enable states to identify and trace in a timely and reliable manner illicit small arms and light weapons, in accordance with resolution 58/241 of 23 December 2003. My delegation earnestly hopes that the General Assembly will adopt the draft international instrument during this session.

The Republic of the Congo, which is a sponsor of two draft resolutions respectively entitled, "Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and collecting them", document A/C.1/60/L.37, and "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects", to be issued as document A/C.1/60/L.57, and we call for the adoption of those draft resolutions, which provide us with appropriate strategies to eliminate the illicit trade in small arms.

Mr. Aisi (Papua New Guinea): I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum member States with Missions to the United Nations, namely Australia, Fiji, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Tonga, Vanuatu and my own country, Papua New Guinea.

The members of the Pacific Islands Forum remain firmly committed to the Programme of Action on Small Arms and to its effective implementation. The countries of the Pacific know only too well the significant costs and destabilizing impact of the uncontrolled flow of small arms and light weapons.

Pacific Island countries are encouraged by the progress this year at the international level on small arms and light weapons. We welcome the entry into force of the Protocol on firearms to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the successful conclusion of negotiations on a draft marking and tracing instrument, both of which will serve to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. While the draft marking and tracing instrument is not all that we might have hoped for, it represents a significant step towards the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action and deserves the First Committee's consensus support to ensure its effective implementation.

At the regional level, we are moving forward on the United Nations Programme of Action. The Pacific Islands Forum Model Weapons Control Bill, developed within the Nadi Framework, continues to be

implemented, but we recognize that more work is required in this area.

Stockpile management and security also remain a focus for the region and, with assistance from Australia and New Zealand, real improvements have been made in this area. Seven new armouries have been constructed for the Papua New Guinea Defence Forces at a cost of \$2.3 million. New armouries have been built for the Cook Islands, Fiji, Nauru and Samoan police forces. Existing facilities were upgraded in Vanuatu, and there are plans for more armouries and magazines to be built for the Republic of Fiji military forces and for the Tuvalu police force. Early next year, New Zealand will host a firearms safety seminar for Pacific Island participants, and there are also plans to provide Tonga with training assistance in ammunition disposal and handling.

The Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI), which comprises civilian and military components from Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Samoa and Tuvalu, working closely with the Solomon Islands Government, continues to make excellent progress, as was recognized earlier this year by the positive report of the Pacific Islands Forum Eminent Persons Group. In its two years of operation, RAMSI has restored law and order and reduced crime. More than 3,600 weapons, including modern automatic and semi-automatic weapons, pistols, shotguns and homemade weapons, and 306,700 rounds of ammunition have been seized or surrendered. In response to community demands, the Solomon Islands National Peace Council is continuing to operate its successful Weapons-Free Village campaign. The National Peace Council provides trauma counselling, mediation, conflict resolution and reconciliation services, peacebuilding initiatives, community education and support for traditional systems of governance. It also conducts training programmes for provincial peace monitors.

In Papua New Guinea, the gun summit, held at Goroka in July, proposed limits on the ownership of guns after the Papua New Guinea Government's Gun-Control Committee conducted cross-country consultations. Australia generously provided \$300,000 in direct funding for the gun summit, and the recommendations of the summit are currently before the Papua New Guinea Cabinet.

The Bougainville Peace Agreement culminated in 2003 in a resolution by the parties that collected weapons would be destroyed and that Bougainville should be weapons-free. In May 2005, the United Nations Observer Mission in Bougainville declared the weapons disposal programme completed and verified that the situation on Bougainville was conducive to holding elections. This is a significant measure of the success of the Bougainville peace process, which involved truce monitors from Australia, Fiji, New Zealand and Vanuatu. The peaceful elections for the first Autonomous Government of Bougainville, successfully held in May and June of this year, were a momentous event in the process of establishing and consolidating a permanent peace on Bougainville.

The members of the Pacific Island Forum look forward next year to reviewing progress made in the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action.

Mr. Freeman (United Kingdom): I am speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU) and all the countries which have aligned themselves with this statement.

Last month, world leaders stressed in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1) the negative effects of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. As we set out in our general statement, the EU believes that easy access to small arms and light weapons exacerbates conflicts, facilitates violent crime and terrorism, impedes post-conflict reconstruction and undermines long-term sustainable development. Small arms and light weapons have been the most instrumental factor in the regional conflicts that, since 1990, have cost the lives of almost 4 million people and have forced over 18 million people to leave their homes or their countries. The European Union is convinced that there is much still to be done to tackle this scourge. To that end, we are currently drafting our own strategy to combat the illicit accumulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, which will complement the United Nations Programme of Action.

On the Programme of Action, a lot of work still remains to be done regarding its implementation and strengthening in particular areas. We look forward to an ambitious and forward-looking Review Conference in 2006, and we would welcome the early identification of Chairpersons both for the Review

Conference and for the Preparatory Committee. We hope for close consultation in New York and Geneva and stress the importance of strong representation from States. To this end, we welcome a sponsorship programme within the United Nations Development Programme.

The EU welcomes the hard work done by the Open-ended Working Group on marking and tracing under the chairmanship of Ambassador Anton Thalmann. However, it is regrettable that no operational provisions on ammunition and peacekeeping operations were included, and that the draft instrument is not legally binding. It is, however, an important step in implementation of the 2001 Programme of Action. In that sense, it represents a positive signal from the international community to those countries most affected by this scourge. If it is applied by States with the necessary political will, the content of the draft instrument will help to discourage, and thus reduce, the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons. We hope that it can be strengthened at further review meetings. The EU will be strongly committed to promoting further the issue of ammunition, thus taking up the recommendations of the Chairman's procedural report.

Brokering and transfer controls are a high priority for the EU. Illicit brokering and trafficking are recognized as among the main factors fuelling the illegal global trade. The EU was among those that insisted on the inclusion in last year's First Committee draft resolution, adopted as resolution 59/86, of a mandate to establish a group of governmental experts on illicit brokering. This group should be convened as soon as possible after the 2006 Programme of Action Review Conference and should be mandated to examine the feasibility of developing an international instrument to prevent, combat and eradicate illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition.

On transfer controls, the EU encourages the use of minimum common standards, including criteria or guidelines to determine authorization for transfer, so as to prevent small arms and light weapons from being diverted and used to fuel conflict, repress human rights and undermine development. Many other groups have joined the EU in calling for increased cooperation on transfer controls within the framework of the Programme of Action. We welcome recent progress made on transfer controls in Central America, the

region of the Common Market of the South, the Caribbean, the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa. We strongly encourage these and other regions and individual States to voice support for the further elaboration of common principles for transfer controls, so that such principles could be considered further in preparation for the 2006 Review Conference. The EU also underlines the importance of supporting the ongoing work on end-user certificates with a view to agreeing, in the long term, in the United Nations framework, upon a consensus on general principles on end-user certificates and best practices in the verification of the recipient.

But EU members have not just implemented agreements, important as that is. The EU is tackling the problem at the grass-roots level. From 2003 to date, in addition to national contributions from member States, the European Union has allocated €88 million for action undertaken by affected countries to deal with the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of small arms and light weapons. The EU has become one of the foremost international actors in efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. EU member States are committed to a continued leading role in this area and call on others to maintain momentum on the implementation of the Programme of Action in the coming years.

Furthermore, the EU was encouraged by the expansion of the scope of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms to include man-portable air defence systems and welcomed moves to encourage reporting on all small arms and light weapons as part of voluntary background information. The EU considers that the time is now ripe for small arms and light weapons to be reflected fully within the scope of the Register and encourages the next review of the Register's scope and operation to address this as a priority. The EU would see this as an important step towards maintaining the relevance of the Register as a practical instrument, unique in the area of conventional arms, and to complement the broad-based work being undertaken through the Programme of Action.

It is recognized that easy availability of small arms and light weapons and high levels of armed violence act as a major barrier to sustainable development. It is important to take this issue forward, notably in view of attention given by the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, the Secretary-General and the world summit outcome

document to the link between security and development. In this respect, the EU calls on States and development agencies to increase their capacity to control the supply of small arms, lower the demand for these weapons and reduce levels of armed violence.

Progress on this issue should be reflected through more resources for the implementation of the Programme of Action in developing countries. Such support will be more effective because it will be tied to long-term development needs. We can also build on progress made at the United Nations summit. The new Peacebuilding Commission could systematically incorporate into its work measures to regulate small arms and light weapons and to improve training in weapons-management procedures.

In the wider context of the need to control the undesirable proliferation of conventional weapons, the EU is supportive of calls for an international agreement on the arms trade. Such a new comprehensive instrument should be based on universally accepted norms and standards. The EU encourages other States and regions to engage in discussions and to express their support for action in this area.

The use of man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS) by terrorists and non-State actors as a tool for threatening civil aviation, as well as aviation involved in peacekeeping operations, warrants worldwide attention and immediate action. MANPADS are extremely lethal, easily concealable and inexpensive. In this respect, the EU firmly supports broader efforts, in various multilateral forums, focusing in particular on export controls, including the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Group of Eight initiative to internationalize controls.

European Union member States have been working with other States in the field of MANPADS destruction and stockpile and security management, and will continue to work proactively to help those States not in a position to do so to secure their stockpiles and to destroy surpluses of those weapons. The EU encourages other States, insofar as they are able, to participate actively in stockpile and security management and destruction activities to help guard against further illicit use.

The EU welcomes progress achieved in universalizing the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Treaty, destroying stockpiled anti-personnel mines, clearing

mined areas and assisting victims. The EU considers the First Review Conference, which took place in Nairobi last year, to have been a landmark success that provided the international community with an opportunity both to assess and reflect on the progress that has been made on the path to a mine-free world and to refocus our efforts on achieving that goal. In order to overcome the remaining challenges to the full implementation of the Convention, the Nairobi Conference agreed on an ambitious Action Plan for the next five years, to which the EU is fully committed.

Building on that success, the EU welcomes the world's appeal to the parties to the Mine Ban Treaty to fully implement their commitments, as well as to all States that are in a position to do so to provide greater technical assistance to mine-affected States. We call upon all States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Mine Ban Treaty as soon as possible.

The European Union has provided assistance to affected States and communities, and will continue to do so. From 2003 to date, European Union member States and the European Community have allocated €384 million for mine action. Speaking on behalf of the European Union, we would like to point to the European Community's Strategy — in particular its Strategy for 2005-2007 — which, in the light of an interim target of zero new victims, seeks to reduce the threat of landmines on the ground and in stockpiles by offering social, economic and medical assistance to local populations affected and to the victims of landmines. The European Union as a whole will continue to support humanitarian mine action focused on the poorest countries. We will continue to work to improve the effectiveness of the international mine action system.

Finally, the European Union is looking forward to a constructive sixth meeting of States parties, to be held in Zagreb later this year. At that meeting, which will be taking place in a mine-affected country in Europe, we believe that it will be important to measure the progress achieved so far in pursuing the Nairobi Action Plan 2005-2009, and therefore welcome the initiative to elaborate a Zagreb progress report.

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) is an important and influential instrument of international and humanitarian law restricting the use of certain types of weaponry. The year 2003 saw the adoption of a fifth Protocol, on

explosive remnants of war, which we hope will soon enter into force. The EU attaches great importance to that Protocol and is pleased to note that, out of the 11 of the 20 ratifications needed, nine are either EU members or associated countries. The EU calls upon all States parties to ratify and implement the Protocol as soon as possible and to report on their progress in ratification.

The CCW is focused at present on the serious humanitarian, development and economic concerns posed by the irresponsible use of mines other than anti-personnel mines. Reliable reports from humanitarian organizations and non-governmental organizations working in conflict zones, as well as from States, highlight those concerns. At the same time, we acknowledge that mines other than anti-personnel mines are legitimate weapons, which serve important military purposes with regard to self-defence and other military operations. It is important to strike a balance between humanitarian concerns and military considerations. We very much welcome and support the efforts undertaken by the coordinator, and fully support his efforts to work out a substantive protocol on mines other than anti-personnel mines, which, together with Amended Protocol II, will be an effective instrument in preventing the irresponsible use of such weapons.

We firmly expect to reach a substantive agreement on this issue at the meeting of States parties in November, and we call upon all States parties to spare no effort to achieve that objective. The European Union will continue to work with the objective of agreeing upon a legally binding instrument on mines other than anti-personnel mines as soon as possible.

We also hope that we will be able to make progress on the other issues currently being discussed, such as compliance and the implementation of existing principles of international humanitarian law and on possible preventive technical measures to minimize the risk of munitions becoming explosive remnants of war.

Mr. Koné (Mali) (spoke in French): As this is the first occasion on which I have taken the floor in the First Committee this session, my delegation would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to guide the proceedings of this important Committee. Our congratulations go also to the other members of the Bureau. We have seen your experience and your pragmatism since the beginning of our work, and we

believe that they augur well for the success of our deliberations. I can assure you that my delegation stands ready to cooperate with you as you discharge your lofty mission.

I would like to pay a well-deserved tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Alfonso de Alba, who conducted the proceedings of the First Committee during the previous session in such an outstanding manner.

I would like to congratulate Mr. Nobuyasu Abe, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, for the very enlightening statement that he made on 3 October. I would also like to associate myself with the statements made by the representatives of Nigeria and of Indonesia on behalf of, respectively, the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement.

I share the legitimate concerns that have been expressed throughout the general debate about the current crisis in the field of disarmament, which is the result of a lack of political will on the part of States because of their differing interests. It has created a deadlock in international arms control and disarmament forums.

The problem of small arms and light weapons continues to be a focus of attention for my country and for all of Africa, since it is a challenge to the peace, security and socio-economic development of our States. Dealing with that scourge will require a collective effort on the part of the international community. In this connection, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Light Weapons in West Africa fully reflects the commitment of our subregion.

My delegation also welcomes the international community's recent adoption of a draft political instrument on the marking and tracing of light weapons, as proposed by the Open-ended Working Group set up for that purpose by the Secretary-General. Although we had hoped that it would be legally binding, the draft international instrument further increases the awareness of States of the gravity of the situation. We hope that it will prove to be just the first phase of a process leading to the desired outcome.

There is a clear connection between disarmament and development: disarmament is an essential requirement for achieving development. In this

connection, we call for the effective implementation of resolution 59/78 on that issue. In this connection, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for the detailed information he has provided in his report (document A/60/161) on assistance to States for curbing illicit traffic in small arms and collecting them.

Mali, for its part, has taken important steps since 1993 to combat the proliferation of light weapons, and its civil society has been very much involved in this effort. One can see this from the 12 November 2004 adoption of law 04-050, which thoroughly regulates the trade, manufacture and possession of weapons and ammunition. This law institutes strict controls and establishes penalties that are a sufficiently strong deterrent, ranging from fines to imprisonment.

In conclusion, I would like to inform delegations that my country has submitted a draft resolution for adoption by our Committee on assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them (A.C.1/60/L.37). I invite other Member States to join in sponsoring the text, so that the Committee can adopt the draft resolution by a broad consensus, as it has with similar texts in the past.

Mr. Loedel (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the States members of the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay — and its associated States — Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela — to address the subject of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, which the Committee is discussing under the "conventional weapons" cluster.

MERCOSUR and its associated States wish to underscore the international community's huge responsibility to make more meaningful progress in combating the scourge of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. This sub-category of conventional weapons continues to breed domestic conflict in many countries, thus jeopardizing peace negotiations and post-conflict stages and further exacerbating situations of violence. A persistent problem in this connection is the easy access by civilians to weapons and ammunition. The number of ways and means of acquiring these weapons, whether through legal or illegal channels, is great. Therefore, MERCOSUR and its associated States deem it necessary for there to be stronger State control and regulation of such weapons in the possession of civilians, to avoid not only the

proliferation of violence, but also the human, social and economic costs that the use of these weapons entails.

Our subregion wishes to reaffirm that it is necessary to reduce the causes of demand so as to develop a culture of peace, in which disputes can be settled without violence, thus reducing the power of weapons in society.

Our group views with concern the fact that multilateral efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons have not attained the proposed objectives. The draft international instrument on marking and tracing that was agreed on by the Open-ended Working Group established to deal with that subject is far from what reflect the needs of the countries most affected by this scourge. It was to be the first international agreement emanating from the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and it was meant to be the acid test of its credibility.

MERCOSUR and its associated States have continuously sought negotiations towards a legally binding document, which would include the topic of ammunition. Such a treaty should include: high-level common standards for proper marking of all arms and light weapons; detailed international standards for establishing a register of arms transfers; provisions for the marking and tracing of ammunition; strategies to strengthen the operative capabilities of Governments when enforcing the agreed measures; provisions making it possible to bring the instrument into accord with the responsibilities that States already possess under international law; and mechanisms for the future review and improvement of the treaty.

Unfortunately, little of this was achieved in the agreed draft instrument. For our countries, and for the cause of combating the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons, the result involves a very delicate precedent for possible future negotiations on a regulatory instrument on the actions of illicit brokers and on a future international treaty on the arms trade — which, in the view of our subregion, are two key elements of the comprehensive approach that these problems require.

MERCOSUR and its associated States attach paramount importance to considering where we are and where we are headed in this struggle vis-à-vis our

expectations in the lead-up to the Review Conference on the Programme of Action expected to be held in mid-2006. In this connection, MERCOSUR and its associated States deem it important to supplement the 2001 Programme of Action with additional decisive agreements in areas such as civilian possession of weapons and arms transfers to illicit armed groups. It is essential to determine the sources, resources and technical assistance necessary to guarantee the sustainability of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, as well as to strengthen the draft instrument on marking and tracing in order to address in greater depth key areas that were not dealt with appropriately.

In conclusion, we wish to recall that one of MERCOSUR's associated States, Colombia, will introduce, along with South Africa and Japan, a draft resolution entitled "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects", to be issued as document A/C.1/60/L.57. MERCOSUR and its associated States acknowledge the importance of that draft resolution, which is similar to others adopted in past years.

Mr. Rowe (Sierra Leone): Let me preface my statement in this thematic debate on conventional weapons by reiterating the commitment of Sierra Leone to the principles of multilateralism and universality in arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. Sierra Leone does not reject any multilateral instrument that is designed to enhance international peace and security. Any delays in the ratification of existing instruments are attributable to the sheer volume of legislation that our Parliament has had to address, especially since the end of the rebel war.

This Committee will recall that last year Sierra Leone ratified the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its first three Protocols and accepted the amendment to Protocol II pertaining to mines, booby traps and other devices, Protocol IV and the Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War. The measures we have taken on the implementation of the Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel landmines, including the destruction of our entire stockpile, are well known. Our commitment to the implementation of the Nairobi Action Plan on landmines is also well known.

Let me turn now to the subject of the illicit trade, circulation and use of small arms and light weapons. Instead of the usual statement, I thought it appropriate at this time to take a slightly different approach by posing some questions. In doing so, I will to some extent be echoing or re-emphasizing some of the issues and concerns that have been expressed by other delegations.

First, why are States being urged to take strong and effective action, including through legally binding instruments, to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons, which is a threat to international peace and security? Why are States being urged to come up with enabling national legislation in compliance with multilateral instruments on nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction? Why is such a high level of determination being demonstrated — including through strong legal measures — to prevent terrorists from making or acquiring what are euphemistically called dirty bombs, as if there were clean bombs?

And why has there been such reluctance on our part to come up with a legally binding international instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely manner, illicit small arms and light weapons? How do we reconcile that reluctance with the preamble of the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects? For instance, in the preamble, did we not express several concerns, including grave concern about the devastating consequences of this phenomenon on children, its wide range of humanitarian and socio-economic consequences and the serious threats it poses to peace, safety, stability and sustainable development at the individual, local, national, regional and international levels? In the preamble, did we not also express recognition that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons undermines respect for international humanitarian law? And did we not recognize that it fuels crime and terrorism? Those points were articulated a few minutes ago by Ambassador Freeman of the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Union.

Granted, the Programme of Action is not an international convention, but a political declaration. The question is, how can we translate those expressions of serious concern into something more concrete — something that is backed by the rule of law?

If something is illicit, it cannot be treated with political declarations alone. If it undermines international humanitarian law, the prescription should not be limited to political declarations or declarations of intent; it must be counteracted by tough laws. The illicit trade in and circulation of small arms and light weapons must be treated accordingly. And because the illicit trade is international in nature, we need legally binding international instruments to address it. Declarations are good, because they constitute programmes of action detailing what States could do to help eradicate and combat the scourge. But we must ask ourselves whether declarations are enough for the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. In the same breath, we must ask ourselves whether political declarations are enough to combat terrorism, which is becoming another scourge in the world today.

In the view of my delegation, considering its magnitude and its wide-ranging consequences for millions of people worldwide, we need to take a comprehensive approach to preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, including illegal brokering and ammunition, which is what my delegation understands the phrase "in all its aspects" to mean. We must see the problem not merely from a disarmament perspective but also, and more important, from the perspective of its humanitarian and development implications.

My delegation notes with interest the number of draft resolutions related to the illicit trade in and circulation of small arms and light weapons that the Committee is being asked to consider at the sixtieth session. It is unprecedented; we are impressed. While we share the concern expressed by other delegations that the 2005 summit outcome document (resolution 60/1) was silent on the vital issue of disarmament and non-proliferation, Sierra Leone welcomes the possibility that the First Committee, as the draft resolutions indicate, will articulate, more than it ever has before, the urgency and indeed the moral imperative of dealing more effectively with the scourge of the illicit trade in and use of small arms and light weapons.

The questions I have posed are not rhetorical. They are, in the view of the Sierra Leone delegation, pertinent and implicitly replete with food for thought. They are relevant in the context of our forthcoming review — which for us will also be an opportunity for

a thorough assessment — of the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action.

In closing, I would like to join others in congratulating you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee and to assure you of the cooperation and support of the Sierra Leone delegation.

Mr. Hu Xiaodi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China is committed to appropriately addressing humanitarian issues in the field of arms control. We maintain that in addressing humanitarian concerns, due consideration should be given to the legitimate military and security needs of sovereign States and to the economic and technological capacities of all countries.

China earnestly fulfils its obligations under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and is committed to enhancing its effectiveness and universality. China has always been deeply concerned about civilian casualties caused by the inappropriate use of landmines, in particular anti-personnel landmines. China supports appropriate and reasonable restrictions on the use of landmines and has strictly implemented the provisions of the amended Protocol to the CCW, on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices.

China has taken an active part in the work of the Group of Governmental Experts of the States Parties to the CCW. We fully understand the humanitarian concerns caused by anti-vehicle landmines. We have consistently adopted a practical approach in exploring appropriate solutions to the issue with other parties and, to that end, have put forward many constructive proposals. At the most recent meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts, held in August this year, we proposed a package solution to the issue of anti-vehicle landmines. We hope that other parties will consider the Chinese package of proposals in a serious and pragmatic manner and that they will take the opportunity to make progress in the relevant discussions.

China fully understands and sympathizes with the problems that landmines have caused for other countries. We have been actively engaged in various forms of international demining assistance and cooperation in recent years. In September, China began a demining assistance programme in Thailand. We sent a group of experts to provide technical training to Thai demining engineers. We also donated demining

equipment and materials to Thailand for the programme.

Vigorously combating illegal activities related to small arms and light weapons is of great importance in maintaining regional peace, stability and development and in fighting terrorism and activities related to transnational organized crime such as drug trafficking and smuggling. The agreement on a draft international instrument on identifying and tracing illicit small arms and light weapons represents important progress in the multilateral process of combating such weapons.

China consistently supports and actively participates in international efforts to solve the problem of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. In April this year, China hosted in Beijing an international workshop on small arms and light weapons, which was co-sponsored by the United Nations, Japan and Switzerland. I am pleased to inform the Committee that the workshop was a great success.

The Review Conference of the United Nations Programme of Action will be convened in 2006. We hope that all countries will make their best efforts to ensure a positive Conference outcome, which will provide a new direction for future multilateral efforts in the field of small arms and light weapons. We take note of the fact that a number of parties have already set out many ideas and initiatives for the 2006 review process. During the preparatory process, which will begin early next year, as well as at the Review Conference itself, all countries can engage in an in-depth study of and debate on those ideas and initiatives. To ensure the authority and universality of the possible outcome of the 2006 Review Conference, consensus must continue to be regarded as an important rule.

Since many countries have yet to make serious study of certain new ideas and suggestions proposed by other countries or groups of countries, the First Committee's meetings this year need not draw any conclusion on those proposals or in any way prejudice the outcome of the 2006 Review Conference, let alone put those immature ideas to the vote. Otherwise, the result of the voting would be highly likely to have a negative impact on the review process next year.

Information security has a bearing on international peace and security, as well as on national economies and people's livelihoods. It is in the interests of all countries, and the common

responsibility of the international community, properly to address the issue of information security for the benefit of maintaining international security and stability. The fact that no substantial results were achieved this year by the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts demonstrates the complexity of the issue and the need for further efforts to find an appropriate solution. China supports comprehensive and in-depth examination by the United Nations of the threats and challenges in the field of information security with a view to formulating reasonable and feasible proposals to address the issue.

Mr. Walsh (Canada): The proliferation and misuse of conventional weapons exact a terrible human toll each year. Lives are lost, communities are traumatized, and societies live in fear. Economic development is stifled, stabilization and peacebuilding efforts are hampered, and human security in all of its aspects is compromised.

Canada remains fully committed to collaborative international action to address the negative effects of conventional weapons on the lives and livelihoods of people throughout the world. There have been significant developments on several conventional arms issues during the past year, and 2006 will present opportunities to build upon our collective achievements to date.

In 2001, United Nations Member States gathered to develop and strengthen international efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. That resulted in a strong United Nations Programme of Action that has provided guidance and impetus for action by the international community for the past few years. Within the framework of the Programme of Action, consensus was achieved in June 2005 on an instrument to mark and trace small arms and light weapons. Although Canada and many others would have preferred a legally binding instrument, the agreement will improve the tracing of small arms and light weapons throughout the world and reduce the incidence of illicit use.

Canada congratulates Switzerland on its deft chairmanship of the Open-ended Working Group on marking and tracing and fully supports the Chair's recommendation that the applicability of provisions of the instrument to United Nations peacekeeping operations be considered further within the framework of the United Nations.

The forthcoming Review Conference in July 2006 will be a seminal opportunity to review our work since 2001, to further elaborate the United Nations Programme of Action, and to develop communications and resource mobilization strategies to generate the political will and resources needed to fulfil our objectives in the years ahead.

Among the specific areas that Canada would like to see discussed and addressed more comprehensively are transfer controls, including export criteria and illicit brokering; national regulation; appropriate use of small arms and light weapons by State security officials and agents; measures to reduce demand for such weapons; and ensuring that the issue be fully integrated into the national and sectoral development plans of affected developing countries.

Turning to the world of mine action, progress has been remarkable. In just over five years, 147 nations have ratified or acceded to the Ottawa Convention, which bans the production, stockpiling, use and transfer of anti-personnel mines and makes provision for the rehabilitation and reintegration of survivors into their communities. More than 37 million stockpiled mines have been destroyed. Vast tracts of land have been cleared and the global trade in such mines has virtually ended. Most important, the number of direct casualties has been cut from approximately 25,000 to be between 15,000 and 20,000 victims per year.

The First Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention — the Nairobi Summit on a Mine-Free World — in November 2004 charted a clear course for the future in a visionary high-level Declaration and an ambitious 70-point Action Plan that will govern the work of States parties for the next five-year period. Canada urges the 50 States not yet party to ratify or to accede to the Ottawa Convention as soon as possible and to become part of the global effort to rid the world of the scourge of anti-personnel landmines for all time.

Canada is also pleased to be party to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW) and its Protocols, which address non-detectable fragments, mines, booby traps and other devices, incendiary weapons and blinding laser weapons. We have ratified Protocols I through IV and are currently preparing our instrument of ratification of Protocol V, which seeks to ameliorate

the humanitarian and development impact of explosive remnants of war.

Canada, like many others, is deeply concerned about all weapons that, by design or by the manner in which they are used, are prone to indiscriminate effect. We strongly encourage States signatories of the CCW to continue work aimed at improving the reliability of specific munitions, including submunitions, and to ensure that they are used only in a manner that complies fully with international humanitarian law.

Canada also supports the prohibition of the use of undetectable anti-vehicle mines and will continue to promote the development of a legally binding instrument governing mines other than anti-personnel mines at the next CCW annual meeting in November.

We know all too well that the cumulative effect of the illicit use of conventional weapons has been nothing less than horrific. I close by reiterating Canada's commitment to working cooperatively with other United Nations Member States to check their deadly legacy and, in so doing, to contribute to the creation of a more secure world for all.

Mr. Kahiluoto (Finland): Speaking for Finland for the first time at this session of the First Committee, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, and offer you and your Bureau our full support as you guide the Committee to a successful outcome.

In addition to the statement made by the representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Union, which we fully support, allow me briefly to highlight Finnish national views on four issues relevant to this thematic discussion.

First, on the issue of the brokering of small arms and light weapons, my delegation would have wished to see a more robust outcome than presently foreseen in the omnibus draft resolution on small arms and light weapons. We share the opinion advocated by several humanitarian actors that the illegal brokering of small arms and light weapons is a well-known and well-defined phenomenon. National and regional legislative and regulatory measures have already been taken to address the issue and, in our opinion, the international community should have in its hands the conceptual tools needed to act more resolutely in tackling that problem as a priority issue. We expect and hope that the group of governmental experts on brokering, to be established in 2006, will begin its work immediately

after the Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, with a mandate that includes at least preliminary elaboration of a draft legal instrument on brokering.

Secondly, I turn to the issue of assistance in capacity-building and implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons. We took note of the discussions on that item in the Second Biennial Meeting of States, held in July. On that basis, Finland believes that a more focused debate on the issue of assistance and capacity-building — taking into account both supply and demand perspectives — would be fostered by an independent study on needs and available resources. Ideally, such a study should be made available as part of the preparations for the 2006 review conference.

Thirdly, as we embark on the review of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms, we should actively seek the maximum involvement of civil society in the process. Our review stands to benefit significantly from the commitment and experience of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), many of which have direct and relevant experience with the issue in the field. The Programme of Action clearly recognizes that partnership, and we should strengthen it. We think it would be highly beneficial if we could endorse the broadest possible participation of NGOs in the review process, including the thematic debates and the Preparatory Committee meetings.

Finally, as a fourth issue, allow me to put on record the December 2004 decision of the Finnish Parliament to approve a Governmental white paper on defence and security policy, and to set a definite timetable for Finland to accede in 2012 to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction — the Ottawa Convention. To that end, we have also decided to join in sponsoring the draft resolution on the Ottawa Convention (A/C.1/60/L.56).

Ms. Auer (Austria): As Austria takes the floor for the first time, my delegation congratulates you, Mr. Chairman, and your Bureau upon your election, and assures you of our full support.

My delegation fully supports the statement made by the representative of the United Kingdom, on behalf of the European Union, in this cluster debate. In November 2004, the States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction met in Nairobi for the Convention's First Review Conference: the Nairobi Summit on a Mine-Free World. The Nairobi Summit accomplished two objectives. First, it took account of what had been achieved so far, and secondly, it defined a forward-looking Action Plan. Indeed, we can celebrate considerable progress. The use of anti-personnel mines has been markedly reduced in recent years. Fewer anti-personnel mines are being produced, and the trade in this perilous weapon has almost completely ceased.

Moreover, the number of States parties to the Convention is approaching 150, including the majority of those States that are most heavily affected by landmines, such as Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Mozambique. The Convention has established an international standard that is also respected by the majority of those States that have not yet joined this important humanitarian instrument. In addition, the States parties to the Convention have destroyed more than 37 million stockpiled anti-personnel mines and have cleared vast tracts of mined lands. The annual number of new mine victims is now significantly lower than it used to be, and many landmine survivors are now receiving better care and assistance.

In order to overcome the remaining challenges, the States parties to the Convention adopted the Nairobi Action Plan 2005-2009, which sets out a comprehensive set of 70 concrete actions, including on the further pursuit of universalization, mine clearance, victim assistance, stockpile destruction and resource mobilization. The most significant challenge for the next five years clearly will be to make sure that States parties meet the 10-year mine clearance deadline for clearing mined areas.

Article V of the Convention requires States parties to make every effort to identify all areas under their jurisdiction or control in which anti-personnel mines are known or suspected to be in place. The Convention does not contain language that would require each State party to search every square metre of its territory to find mines. The Convention requires, however, the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in

mined areas which a State Party has made reasonable efforts to identify. While terms such as "mine-free", "impact-free" and "mine-safe" are sometimes used, such terms do not exist in the text of the Convention and are not synonymous with Convention obligations.

In November this year, the States parties to the Convention will gather in Zagreb for the Convention's Sixth Meeting of States Parties. It is reassuring that the States parties were not affected by post-summit fatigue. To the contrary, States parties are proceeding with an innovative process making it possible to measure the progress achieved in the implementation of the Nairobi Action Plan and to identify priority areas for the following year. The so-called Zagreb progress report is now being prepared in a cooperative effort involving all interested States parties to the Convention, as well as relevant organizations. It is supposed to be the first in a series of annual reports on progress made in pursuing the aims of the Nairobi Action Plan. We are convinced that this method will contribute significantly to the implementation of commitments undertaken in the Convention and the Nairobi Action Plan.

Austria welcomes the appeal of the 2005 world summit to the parties to the Mine Ban Treaty to fully implement their commitments, as well as to all States in a position to do so to provide greater assistance to mine-affected States. In addition, Austria wishes to call upon all States that have not yet done so, to ratify or accede to the Mine Ban Treaty as soon as possible, in order to achieve our goal of conclusively ending the suffering caused by anti-personnel mines, for all people, for all time.

Mr. Mine (Japan): With the permission of the Chair, I shall make a statement combining the introduction of a draft resolution and remarks of a general nature.

The United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms, adopted by consensus in 2001, provides an essential guide for comprehensive efforts to address the multifaceted issue of small arms and light weapons. It is essential for the international community to actively and steadfastly implement the Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels.

Recognizing that, Japan, together with Colombia and South Africa, is again submitting a draft resolution entitled "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects", to be issued as document

A/C.1/60/L.57, the content of which, as with similar texts in previous years, provides concrete steps for the near future based on the progress achieved in the course of the past year in this field. We sincerely hope we will receive the support and cooperation of all Member States in the draft resolution's consensus adoption, as we believe that it offers a reliable approach to resolving the problem.

The year 2006, when the Review Conference takes place, will mark a significant turning point for the international community in tackling problems related to small arms and light weapons. As mentioned in this year's draft resolution, the Review Conference is extremely important for setting the agenda in this field beyond 2006, and Japan therefore wishes to encourage all States parties to make every effort to ensure a successful outcome by involving participants from civil society offering useful knowledge and experience.

At the Review Conference, it is essential for us to examine all aspects of the small arms and light weapons problem, which are multifaceted and complicated and are inter-linked in a complex manner. Each country or region has different problems, depending on its own specific circumstances. Bearing this point in mind during the Review Conference, we must seek to identify the problems that the international community should address jointly in the future, and set the agenda accordingly.

The problems that the international community must take steps to address are gradually becoming apparent. In this connection, Japan believes that we had good discussions at the Second Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in July. Without mentioning each individual element, let me say that the challenges illuminated by the Biennial Meeting provided very useful indications about the appropriate topics for discussion at the Review Conference. I would just like to touch upon the request from certain countries to insert in the draft resolution a paragraph concerning the inclusion of the concept of small arms and light weapons transfer controls in future programmes of action. I actively participated in discussions at the Biennial Meeting, and I am aware that transfer controls was one of the important issues very widely discussed on that occasion. But, during the

discussions, there were also other issues deemed to be important. I believe it is premature to say something that might prejudice the result of the Review Conference.

In any case, I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation of the efforts the Chairman, Ambassador Pasi Patokallio, whose dedicated efforts ensured the success of the Meeting.

On the subject of the Preparatory Committee for the 2006 Review Conference, we have the first set of talks scheduled for two weeks next January and, if necessary, we will have another round of Preparatory Committee talks for two weeks at a later date, leading to the Review Conference. The most important task for the Preparatory Committee will be setting the agenda for the Review Conference. What to include as topics for discussion and consideration at the Review Conference should be discussed in that forum. In the meantime, paragraph 1 of our draft resolution encourages all initiatives for the successful conclusion of the Review Conference. We look forward to the early designation of a Chairperson of the Preparatory Committee, and I would like to invite all delegations to provide him or her with the necessary input.

Some ideas about the eventual topics to be discussed on this occasion, such as ammunition, end user certificates, regulation of civilian possession and so forth, are presented for inclusion in the draft resolution. However, it is quite difficult to determine at this point whether or not these items enjoy consensus as topics. Nor do we have sufficient time to discuss these somewhat controversial matters.

In addition, Japan believes that the Review Conference will be a good opportunity for each country to share its experiences with respect to implementation of the draft international instrument on marking and tracing, the negotiations on which we concluded in June this year. I would like to reiterate here the great significance of its implementation and to call upon all States to continue their steady efforts in that regard.

Concerning the group of governmental experts on brokering, by paragraph 3 the Assembly would decide to establish such a group to consider further steps to enhance international cooperation on brokering. The mandate is based on the language of the Programme of Action. Some Member States have requested us to define the group's mandate more precisely, proposing to allow for consideration of the feasibility of

developing an international instrument. However, "further steps to enhance international cooperation", to use the words of the ninth preambular paragraph, are not necessarily limited to the question of international instruments. The summary of the discussion of the broad-based consultations held in 2005 also indicates that the feasibility of the instrument is not the only question to be addressed on the brokering issue. Other issues would include specific data on the magnitude of the illicit brokering, existing national legislation and regional or international agreements and forms of international cooperation needed — quite apart from an international instrument, if I may add. The group of governmental experts itself should determine the agenda to be addressed and the direction to be followed in its deliberations.

I also would like to emphasize the importance of promoting projects on the ground. Japan is actively applying its two-pillar approach by promoting, in parallel, projects on the ground and the international rule-making efforts that I mentioned earlier. With regard to the former pillar, we will continue to provide assistance to projects for collecting and destroying surplus small arms and light weapons in affected countries and for capacity-building in the areas of law enforcement and export-import controls. We will also strengthen our efforts to provide aid in the field of conflict prevention and post-conflict recovery processes, which constitute important elements of peacebuilding, a major focus of Japan's medium-term official development assistance policy.

I would now like to make some remarks on the overall situation related to small arms and light weapons, on which I understand that there are several draft resolutions this year. Generally speaking, now that we are making vigorous efforts to reform the First Committee and to improve its effectiveness, it is appropriate that draft resolutions that are similar in nature be merged to the maximum extent feasible. Japan believes that efforts in that direction are important and requests the continued cooperation of the countries concerned in this regard.

Since the adoption of the Programme of Action, each country has been actively tackling small arms and light weapons problems, and we have seen significant progress in this field. However, much remains to be done. Each country concerned has its own ideas on how to adequately address these problems. Japan believes this thematic debate provides us with an

important opportunity for a frank exchange of views among countries. I sincerely hope we will engage in active and profound discussions on this issue.

I now have a few words in respect to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. I strongly hope that the States parties meeting in November will succeed in adopting a draft protocol on mines other than anti-personnel mines, something which has been under discussion for over four years. There remain only a few outstanding issues, and the goal is almost within reach. I urge all the States parties to exercise flexibility so that we may create an instrument that will minimize the humanitarian problem caused by such mines while maintaining the option of their use in cases of military necessity.

Finally, as regards the Ottawa Treaty on Anti-personnel Mines, the coming States parties meeting, to be held in Croatia in November and December, is the first States parties meeting since the Nairobi Summit, held last year. I strongly hope that the meeting will ensure and promote progress in implementing the Nairobi Action Plan, as well as offering further direction towards its full implementation. Among the Action Plan items, Japan would like to emphasize the importance of the universalization of the Convention and the effective implementation of projects relating to anti-personnel mines.

Mr. Streuli (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I shall limit my remarks to the subject of conventional weapons. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate the importance that Switzerland attaches to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW) and its Protocols.

In the nearly 10 years since the First Review Conference took place, the States parties have succeeded in making the CCW a dynamic instrument, capable of continual adaptation to the development of conventional weapons of modern warfare. They have boldly addressed questions central to improving humanitarian protection of civilian populations, banning, *inter alia*, blinding laser weapons and incendiary weapons in certain circumstances, and recently adopting, in the form of Protocol V, measures

to reduce the harmful effects of the explosive remnants of war. The process of ratifying Protocol V in Switzerland has now entered its final phase. My country invites all States that have not yet done so to ratify the Protocol with a view to attaining its universality.

Although the discussion on mines other than anti-personnel mines was launched following the Second Review Conference, in 2001, it is only recently that the positions of States parties have converged sufficiently for there to be efforts to search for a comprehensive solution to the humanitarian problems these weapons cause. Switzerland holds the view that civilian populations need to be better protected against the indiscriminate effects of these mines, while remaining fully aware that, in addition to humanitarian needs, military considerations must be taken into account. My country believes that any new instrument must enhance the protection of civilian populations. The new rules concerning mines other than anti-personnel mines must clearly strengthen rather than weaken current international humanitarian law, in particular amended Protocol II to the CCW. This is why Switzerland is in the process of reviewing the working documents submitted by the coordinator of the Working Group on Mines Other Than Anti-Personnel Mines, with regard both to their compatibility with current international humanitarian law and to their potential to strengthen it.

Some aspects of the problem posed by explosive remnants of war, in particular in post-conflict phases, have been regulated through legally binding provisions linked to the adoption of Protocol V. Switzerland is encouraged by the adoption of the Protocol and by the continuation of the discussions, within the framework of the CCW, on explosive remnants of war. My country considers that broader measures are essential to prevent the devastating effects of certain types of munitions, including submunitions, on civilian populations and national development. In particular, my country wishes to underline the need for a set of international regulations on preventive technical measures that can, *inter alia*, improve the reliability of certain types of munitions, including submunitions. Switzerland will therefore continue its efforts towards that end, as it has been doing for the more than five years since it submitted to the States parties an initial proposal for international regulations on this issue. We actively support the efforts to develop common standards for technical requirements applicable to submunitions.

Switzerland considers it essential to continue the discussions on the explosive remnants of war beyond the next Meeting of States Parties.

Switzerland is also encouraged that the efforts of the States parties to create a compliance mechanism for the CCW and its Protocols are progressing, and hopes that an effective and credible solution can be found very soon.

My country also attaches great importance to the universalization and implementation of Protocol II on the Prohibition or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices, as amended in 1996. It considers Protocol II to be an indispensable complement to the other instruments of international humanitarian law on mines and other devices, as a means to reduce the suffering of civilian populations during and after conflict. In my capacity as President-designate of the Seventh Annual Conference of the States Parties to the Protocol, which will take place in just over a month's time, I am committed to encouraging those States which have not already done so to become parties to the Protocol, and to assisting States parties to ensure the best possible implementation of the Protocol in their countries.

Mr. Kurup (India): While nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as weapons of mass destruction, are rightly accorded priority in the area of disarmament and arms control, conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, constitute an important — and arguably a more immediate — concern for humanity. This is because of continuing armed conflicts between States where conventional weapons are used, and also because of the prevalence of intra-State conflicts and terrorism in various parts of the world.

India therefore remains deeply concerned that conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, continue to pose a grave danger to the security of States. Their indiscriminate and irresponsible use, including by non-State actors, has caused enormous humanitarian concern. Such weapons disrupt political stability and social harmony, derail pluralism and democracy and hamper growth and development. They also fuel international terrorism and internal conflicts.

The United Nations has had a measure of success in dealing with the threat posed by illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. The adoption by consensus of

the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in July 2001 reflected the common commitment of Member States to address this issue. The Programme of Action outlines a realistic, achievable and comprehensive approach to addressing the problem at the national, regional and global levels. India believes that efforts to combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons will contribute to global efforts to combat terrorism and other organized crime. We believe that State responsibility is critical in ensuring this, primarily through efforts made by individual States themselves, and also through cooperation with other States at the regional and global levels.

The Biennial Meeting of States, in July 2005, provided a welcome opportunity to take stock of national implementation of the Programme of Action. We now look forward to the 2006 Review Conference, which will provide an opportunity to review the effectiveness of the Programme of Action in achieving its objectives and to consider further measures to strengthen and promote its implementation. We would like the Review Conference to consider additional measures to increase the efficacy of the Programme of Action, including the prohibition of transfers of weapons to non-State actors.

It is a positive development that we succeeded in reaching consensus on a draft international instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons. Even though it will not be a legally binding instrument, which India would have preferred, we joined the consensus, since the draft instrument contains vital commitments by States to mark all small arms and light weapons according to universal standards and to cooperate with other States in tracing illicit ones. This significant achievement reflects our common commitment to achieving the objectives enshrined in the Programme of Action. Indeed, agreement on the draft instrument reinforces the multilateral ethic that is so frequently absent in today's discourse on disarmament and arms control.

India will also continue to pursue the objective of a non-discriminatory, universal and global ban on anti-personnel mines in a manner that addresses the legitimate defence requirements of States. Landmines continue to play an important role in the defence of States that have long land borders with difficult and

inhospitable terrains. The process of completely eliminating anti-personnel mines will be facilitated by the availability of militarily effective, non-lethal and cost-effective alternative technologies.

Under the umbrella of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), States parties to the Convention have achieved considerable success in dealing with the humanitarian concerns posed by indiscriminate use of landmines. Its Protocol II, dealing with landmines and booby-traps, was amended in 1996 to make it more effective in minimizing the danger posed by landmines. The scope of the Convention was extended in 2001 to cover internal conflicts. In 2003, another Protocol was added to the CCW to deal with the dangers to civilians posed by explosive remnants of war. That was a signal achievement upon which we can build further in the CCW process. India is strongly committed to the CCW and has ratified its five Protocols, including Amended Protocol II and Protocol V, on explosive remnants of war.

India had the privilege to chair the CCW process during 2002 and 2003, when the Working Group on Explosive Remnants of War engaged in negotiations to conclude Protocol V. A working group within the Group of Governmental Experts to Prepare the Review Conference for the CCW continues to consider the implementation of existing principles of international humanitarian law in the context of explosive remnants of war. It is also studying possible preventive measures aimed at improving the design of certain specific types of munitions, including submunitions, in order to minimize the humanitarian risks of such munitions becoming explosive remnants of war. Another working group - the Working Group on Mines Other Than Anti-Personnel Mines - has the responsibility to consider proposals with the aim of elaborating appropriate recommendations. The Indian delegation is continuing its constructive contributions to the deliberations of both those bodies.

We shall work for steady progress in the areas of small arms and light weapons and the CCW process. We hope that the process will be extended to other areas of conventional disarmament, leading to the goal of general and complete disarmament.

Mr. Limon (Suriname): On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Suriname, I am

honoured to address the Committee in its thematic debate on conventional weapons.

The proliferation of conventional weapons in many regions of the world continues to pose an enormous threat to international peace and security. The possibility that such weapons will end up in the hands of those who engage in organized crime cannot be denied. The responsibility for preventing such transfers from licit to illicit hands lies not only at the national level, but also among States, at the international level. States must take urgent action to stop the illicit flow of these weapons to various regions, and we welcome the already established bilateral subregional cooperation initiatives.

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is a difficult problem that requires a comprehensive response. States must demonstrate the necessary political will to effectively address the issue of identifying and tracing these weapons and to combat the complex problems related to the illicit trade in them.

In Suriname, as in the rest of the Caribbean region, the illicit trade in these weapons is linked to drug trafficking and other cross-border criminal activities, and it threatens our social and economic fabric. Suriname thus acknowledges the threat posed by the illegal trafficking in arms. We are convinced that the illicit proliferation and circulation of and traffic in small arms impede development.

My country remains committed to the implementation of the 2001 Programme of Action on Small Arms and has submitted its reports in that regard. However, like many other developing countries, we face tremendous difficulties in implementing such multilaterally agreed instruments. We therefore continue to support the call for increased cooperation at the national, regional and international levels.

Landmines constitute one of the major issues on the agenda of the First Committee. Because of the suffering of thousands of innocent people every year, it is necessary that States take strong measures to combat this phenomenon by acceding to and implementing the Ottawa Convention. With the adoption of the 2004 Nairobi Declaration and the Nairobi Action Plan 2005-2009, States renewed their commitment to achieving the goal of the Ottawa Convention, namely, a world free of anti-personnel mines.

Suriname ratified the Ottawa Convention on landmines on 23 May 2002 and recently completed its demining project. Suriname was declared mine-free as of April 2005. However, we are still engaged in adjusting the legislation on landmines as a continued effort to implement the provisions of the Ottawa Convention and of its Protocols.

Suriname continues to support the idea of an effective and legally binding multilateral instrument on small arms and light weapons within the framework of the United Nations. Despite the fact that we could reach agreement only on a draft political document during the work of the Open-ended Working Group on marking and tracing, Suriname would like to stress the importance of cooperation among all States in addressing the illicit trade in and illicit proliferation of these relatively small but dangerous weapons.

Ms. Vikoy (Norway): The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons remains a major challenge to security and development in many regions of the world. Easy access to small arms makes violence more lethal and conflict more protracted. The Millennium Development Goals are unattainable in such an environment. We are pleased that the summit outcome document (resolution 60/1) reflects that understanding.

The United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms remains the main international framework for dealing with the challenge of small arms and light weapons. The recent Biennial Meeting of States reflected slow but steady progress in its implementation. We welcome the agreement on a politically binding draft instrument on marking and tracing, reached in June this year. Norway would, however, have preferred a legally binding instrument. The General Assembly must now adopt the proposed instrument and should also provide direction concerning how to deal with the question of ammunition.

The next step in implementing the Programme of Action is to enhance international cooperation on brokering. Norway has, together with the Netherlands, supported a number of regional and international activities to promote better understanding of the brokering issue. Norway believes there is already a significant degree of international consensus on the need for brokering controls and on the means to be employed. Since 2001, six regional and multilateral

agreements concerning arms brokering, covering some 120 States, have been developed.

The time is ripe to build on that consensus. We urge all Member States to agree at the present session of the General Assembly on a mandate for a group of governmental experts to look into ways of enhancing international cooperation on combating the illicit brokering of small arms and light weapons. The mandate should state that the group of experts should look into the feasibility of a legally binding instrument on brokering. We believe that the group of experts should start its work as early as possible in 2006.

The next milestone will be the 2006 conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action. It would be appropriate if at the present session the General Assembly provided some direction regarding the preparations for the Review Conference by agreeing on some priorities for the next five-year phase.

We should look for ways in which to improve the security environment for the individual. A key motivation for acquiring small arms and light weapons is a sense of insecurity. Governments, law enforcement agencies and civil society all have crucial roles to play in enhancing security at the individual level.

We must address problems related to the misuse of small arms and light weapons by State agencies and non-State actors alike. Civilian ownership remains a vital issue. Most illegal weapons are originally legally acquired and later diverted. The issue of brokering — already on the table — is central. It needs to be accompanied by progress in developing end-user certificates for the trade in small arms and light weapons.

Another relevant issue is the gender dimension and, in particular, the way women are affected by the misuse of small arms. Assistance to victims and their families is also important in this regard. At the same time, we must avoid overloading the agenda of the Review Conference and must focus on those issues we consider the most important and on which we believe real progress can be made.

We support efforts to secure agreement on a legally binding arms trade treaty covering all trade in conventional weapons. This effort should be seen as complementary to, not an alternative to, the efforts to

agree on a legally binding instrument on illicit brokering of small arms and light weapons.

Norway welcomes all ongoing efforts to prevent the illicit production, transfer and unauthorized access to man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS), their components and related use instructions materials. We recognize that MANPADS pose a threat to civil aviation, peacekeeping, crisis management and global security, and we encourage the development of effective controls in that area, including the safe and effective management of stockpiles of such weapons. We fully support the Australian draft resolution on this subject (A/C.1/60/L.49).

Norway welcomes the efforts by Sweden to obtain General Assembly support for the work done in the context of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). The Convention is a crucial instrument in mitigating the humanitarian impact of certain weapons. Over the past years there has indeed been progress within the CCW. We have agreed on a legally binding Protocol on the explosive remnants of war, and we hope that the Protocol will enter into force as soon as possible. Our next task is to agree on preventive measures in order to mitigate human suffering caused by the use of submunitions. Our efforts should be guided by our obligations under international humanitarian law. We hope to make substantial progress later this autumn.

We are, however, still struggling to move forward on reaching agreement on a mandate to negotiate a new protocol dealing with the adverse humanitarian consequences of anti-vehicle mines. We also need to come to agreement on measures to ensure full compliance with CCW obligations. We have been deliberating on this subject for years. Now it is time to make the necessary compromises in order to agree on a credible mechanism.

The Mine Ban Treaty illustrates that Governments and civil society can successfully work together to overcome a severe humanitarian challenge. The Treaty has set a norm against the use of anti-personnel mines. The Treaty has contributed to saving thousands of lives. The Treaty has paved the way for more resources and cooperation for mine-clearance and assistance to mine victims. The Mine Ban Treaty has achieved impressive results, but much remains to be done. We must maintain our political and financial commitments to this Treaty.

Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The topic of conventional weapons, under consideration in the Committee today, is no less important than that of weapons of mass destruction for maintaining international peace and security. In recent years, statistics have indicated that during armed conflict it is precisely conventional weapons that cause tremendous suffering to civilians and combatants alike.

Because of the growing danger of the uncontrolled and illegal spread of conventional weapons, we support the international community's efforts to eliminate the humanitarian consequences of their use. During the past year, a great deal has been done to resolve the problem of the uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons, which cause the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people in regional conflicts.

We note the consensus outcome of the work of the Open-ended Working Group to Negotiate an International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace in a Timely and Reliable Manner Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. It clearly defines the steps to be taken to prevent illegal trafficking in small arms and light weapons. It is very important that the international community now has a practical draft instrument in the area of combating small arms and light weapons. Now, Member States must make effective use of it.

At the Second Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action, further ways and means of achieving those goals were outlined. As the next, very important stage on this issue, we are engaged in preparations for the holding in July 2006 of the United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action.

We support the draft resolution on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, submitted by Japan. We are prepared to support and become a sponsor of draft decision A/C.1/60/L.55, submitted by Switzerland, by which the General Assembly would adopt the draft instrument proposed by the Open-ended Working Group on marking and tracing.

We believe that there is an unprecedentedly grave problem of controlling weapons like man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS). In the hands of terrorists, such weapons would pose a direct threat to civil aviation. We have been actively working on the

problem of MANPADS with our partners in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). In December 2004, the CIS proposed ways and means for exchanging information on the acquisition, sale and transfer of those weapons.

The Russian Federation shares the concern of the international community regarding the serious humanitarian consequences of the use of anti-personnel mines. We believe we must rid the world of those weapons. A specific contribution of the Russian Federation towards achieving that goal was its 2004 ratification of Protocol II of the Convention on Conventional Weapons.

In principle, we do not reject the idea of becoming a party to the Convention on the complete elimination of landmines at a reasonable time in the future. But, in reality, that can be done only when we are certain of our capacity to fulfil our obligations, and for that to occur we must first resolve a number of military, technical, economic and financial problems.

Concerning our concrete contribution to demining and mine disarmament, the Russian Federation has done much to reduce the stocks of such weapons and munitions. Over the last few years, we have eliminated more than 6 million anti-personnel mines. We also have plans to destroy a further 10 million anti-personnel mines and stockpiles, making use of effective and environmentally safe technologies.

We would like to commend the Group of Governmental Experts in Geneva for its work on mines other than anti-personnel mines. We favour continued research in that regard. We believe that artificial haste in a matter directly related to maintaining the weapons-readiness of States would be counterproductive and undesirable.

We have begun the procedure for ratifying the amendments to article 1 of the CCW, which would make it applicable to non-international conflicts. We are embarking on similar work on Protocol V on the explosive remnants of war.

We would like to share our concern in connection with the situation that has arisen in the sphere of Europe-wide arms control. Through no fault of ours, the entry into force of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, as amended in 1999, has been dragging on for some years. Russia has done everything within its power to bring the adapted Treaty

into force with all possible speed, including by ratifying the agreement on adaptation of the Treaty in the summer of 2004. Now the ball is in the court of our Western partners. We do not intend to continue pretending that the 1990 version of the Treaty is functioning normally and that we are satisfied with it. If the current situation does not take a turn for the better, then clearly all of us who are parties to the Treaty face some very complicated negotiations about its future at the Third Review Conference, to be held in May of next year.

In conclusion, we would like to observe that the multilateral Treaty on Open Skies, developed with the active participation of the Russian Federation, represents a major step in strengthening trust and security. Together with the Treaty on Conventional Weapons in Europe and the Vienna Document 1999, the entry into force of the Treaty on Open Skies has virtually concluded the formation of a regime of transparency and trust in the conventional weapons sphere in the Euro-Atlantic space. We believe that this was an important contribution to implementation of the whole range of initiatives of Russian President Putin to guarantee security and strategic stability, including by enhancing the transparency of military activities.

The Russian delegation will be guided by the aforementioned considerations when we consider the draft resolutions before the Committee.

Mr. De Alba (Mexico) (spoke in Spanish): The Mexican delegation would like to make a few comments, particularly with regard to small arms and light weapons. We will also briefly touch upon anti-personnel landmines.

First, we wish to reaffirm the commitment of the Government of Mexico to making headway in the control of small arms and light weapons in all its aspects and to ensuring that they become far less readily available. As many members are aware, Mexico has been promoting these topics both regionally and internationally. We have participated in the formulation of the major agreements on implementation of the 2001 Programme of Action. Here, as we said at the Second Biennial Meeting of States, there have been positive results, but these are far from sufficient.

I wish therefore to identify the areas in which we work should intensify our work with a view to ensuring a more meaningful Review Conference in 2006. We believe that the Conference should first and foremost

take into account the multidimensional nature of the issue of small arms and light weapons and should emphasize aspects related not only to disarmament but also to crime prevention, the reduction of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law and the impact on development.

While those aspects have been actively addressed in various forums, they have not been brought together to strengthen the Programme of Action and its 2006 review. The Government of Mexico is of the view that it is crucial to make headway in combating the problem in the context of crime prevention and improved control over the trade in these weapons and over persons involved in such trade, with a view to preventing and combating this illicit trade.

We welcome the initiatives put forward at this session of the First Committee to broaden the focus of the Review Conference. A number of innovative draft resolutions have already been introduced which focus on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons vis-à-vis development, peace, security and human rights. We are among the sponsors of those draft resolutions. Attention is also being paid to issues such as the regulation of ammunition and explosives, which, unfortunately, do not figure in the recent draft instrument on marking and tracing.

We also welcome initiatives aimed at finding solutions to the issues of civilian possession and national regulations, because these not only have a negative impact on the civilian population in each and every State, but also very frequently have cross-border effects as well. We would also have liked to see some progress on illicit brokering, but unfortunately we see none. Last year, we agreed to establish a group of experts to study the topic; we found that entirely insufficient. We would have liked to be in a position to approve the establishment of an open-ended committee to negotiate a legally binding instrument. The option of a legally binding instrument and negotiations that could commence much sooner than stipulated in the resolution are topics that we think could be discussed at the 2006 Conference.

We also think that action in certain areas related to assistance to victims and survivors should be strengthened. We have been working in that connection and believe that these issues were not addressed in depth in the present Programme of Action. That is true also of the gender perspective, which has not been

addressed sufficiently, and is true as well of a central problem that remained outstanding at the end of the last-minute negotiations in this room: transactions with non-State actors.

These are some of the areas that the Mexican delegation will be emphasizing. We think that in the First Committee we should have somewhat more informal discussions than the present debate about how best to prepare for a successful outcome of the Conference and, first and foremost, how best to prepare for the meeting of the Preparatory Committee set for January.

We welcome efforts to strengthen the legal framework, but we must point out that, in the view of Mexico, some of these, specifically relating to the marking and tracing of weapons, are insufficient. In the course of negotiations we repeatedly emphasized the great importance of such an instrument being legally binding. Beyond that, we stressed that it was essential to retain the inclusion of the components involved — that is, ammunition; to include a major step on the specific topic of how weapons are to be marked; to abandon marking with symbols, which presented enormous difficulties in tracing; to limit the national security safeguards that some States had introduced in previous exercises; and to strengthen controls and marking, particularly at the time of exportation or importation. All of those elements were omitted in the final result.

We have a document that falls considerably short of the standards we reached in Vienna during the negotiations on the draft Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials, and that falls even shorter with regard to the standards that the States not only of Latin America, but of the entire Western Hemisphere gave us by adopting the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials.

Thus, while the delegation of Mexico recognizes that the draft political instrument now agreed upon is a step forward for the international community and for many States and that it may be a useful tool, we must state clearly that it does not meet the standards to which I just referred. Above all, this outcome should alert us to the fact that it is highly inadvisable to

continue to agree on texts on the basis of the lowest common denominator.

We believe that we are doing the United Nations and the international community no good when we adopt documents that fall so short. Just a few minutes ago, we listened to the representative of the Russian Federation speak about the Ottawa Convention and the possibility that Russia might soon become a State party. That is exactly what we seek: standards that we can aspire to once we have made legislative changes or have adopted relevant measures, but that constitute a higher threshold than the status quo. The status quo — the mere acknowledgement of a problem and the will to address it without concrete measures — does not help the Organization.

We point that out, moreover, in the light of the aforementioned negotiations on brokering and the need for binding instruments. Of course, for Mexico, it will be very important to be able, in due course, to begin negotiations on a binding instrument on the national regulation of civilian possession of small arms and light weapons.

I should like to conclude by referring briefly to the subject of anti-personnel landmines in order to reaffirm Mexico's support for efforts to achieve the universality of the Ottawa Convention and, of course, efforts aimed at the full implementation of the Nairobi Action Plan 2005-2009, which was adopted recently at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention. We will continue to work to give the Convention a sense of attention to victims' needs. As indicated, in the context of victim assistance efforts, we will seek a way to continue to make a contribution, as we did when we developed a programme with the Government of Canada and the Pan-American Health Organization a few years ago.

Mr. Park In-kook (Republic of Korea): The pernicious effects of the misuse or illegal use of conventional weapons have been witnessed in national instability, regional conflict and terrorism. Conventional arms, if illegally, irresponsibly or recklessly used, can inflict harm and misery equal to those caused by weapons of mass destruction.

However, in sharp contrast to a lingering stalemate in the area of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), we are pleased to note that steady and remarkable progress has been made in the area of conventional arsenals. It is our earnest hope that the

valuable progress made in disarmament and non-proliferation related to conventional weapons will spread to the field of WMDs in the years to come.

The United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms identified the tracing of illicit small arms and light weapons as a key mechanism for national, regional and international efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in such weapons. My delegation is pleased to note that the Open-ended Working Group to Negotiate an International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace in a Timely and Reliable Manner Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons successfully concluded its negotiations by adopting a draft international instrument. Although we are not completely satisfied with the outcome of the negotiations — particularly in connection with the draft instrument's lack of legal power and the exclusion of ammunition from that document — we are confident that the draft instrument will help to accelerate the global efforts to eliminate illicit small arms and light weapons. In that regard, we commend in particular Ambassador Thalmann, Chairman of the Working Group, for his dedication and leadership in bringing about the successful outcome of the negotiations.

We attach great importance to the next year's Review Conference on the Programme of Action. In our view, the Review Conference should remain a genuine forum for gaining insight based on experiences and lessons, and should redirect and reorient the global process on small arms and light weapons. That is why we look forward to a frank exchange of views and to lively and interactive discussions at the forthcoming Review Conference.

My delegation believes that the Working Group on Mines Other Than Anti-Personnel Mines has entered a critical phase of its discussions on the work still to be carried out on the incidence and detectability of and restrictions on the use of such mines. Since the Group's most recent meeting, in March, it has been very encouraging to see the growing possibility of a broad convergence of views on a number of key principles for addressing the humanitarian risks caused by the irresponsible use of these mines. We believe that that progress is attributable largely to our collective efforts, including the Coordinator's excellent work to bridge differing views. It is our sincere hope that we can all recognize that the subject of mines other than anti-personnel mines is sufficiently ripe for a legally

binding instrument based on the guiding principle that a balance must be struck between humanitarian concerns and military considerations.

Concerning the issue of explosive remnants of war, it is urgent to ensure strict implementation of the generic preventive measures provided for in Protocol V to the Treaty on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), on explosive remnants of war. In the meantime, with respect to the issue of implementing the existing principles of international humanitarian law related to explosive remnants of war, we support the three-step approach suggested by the Coordinator.

My delegation would also like to recognize the tireless efforts of South Africa and the European Union to promote the implementation of the CCW and its Protocols. The Republic of Korea wishes to establish a credible compliance mechanism covering the entire Convention and its Protocols. We favour a straightforward compliance mechanism that is consistent with that provided for in amended Protocol II.

Mr. Freeman (United Kingdom): Mr. Chairman, I apologize for taking the floor, but it seems to me that we have had a rather interesting discussion this afternoon. Speaking for the European Union (EU) presidency, I am encouraged to engage interactively, which I think, Mr. Chairman, that you and others are always seeking to encourage.

I am encouraged to do so by the intervention earlier this afternoon by the representative of Japan. I listened carefully to Mr. Mine's remarks concerning the draft resolution on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. We respect and applaud the role Japan is playing and has played in advancing this very important agenda, in this forum and more generally.

Ambassador Mine acknowledged that a number of countries believe the draft resolution which Japan has sponsored could be made even better — even more useful — if some additional considerations were reflected; he touched upon some of these. I would like, if I may, just to respond to the points he made on the three examples he touched upon. The first concerned developing small arms and light weapons transfer controls within the United Nations Programme of Action. Ambassador Mine suggested that this might be taken to pre-judge the Programme of Action Review Conference if it were reflected in the draft resolution. I must say that we do not agree with that. A preambular

reference to this issue would, in our view, highlight ongoing work and point out an important issue for consideration next year.

As Ambassador Mine himself recalled, at the Biennial Meeting of States, earlier this year, transfer controls was a subject much discussed in interventions in the meeting and in side meetings. Indeed, we calculated at the time that something in excess of about 40 countries raised this or endorsed it in one way or another, in addition to the large number of members of the European Union and countries that align themselves with us on this issue.

The second point is that we also think that making a preambular reference of some kind to possible topics for discussion and consideration of the Preparatory Committee, without prejudice, I stress, to the eventual Review Conference agenda, would help in preparation for the meetings next year. Developing preparatory suggestions of this kind would help us to focus discussion and would allow us to make the best of the time available next year. With the Preparatory Committee only a small number of working weeks away, it is surely right to be starting to focus our thinking on key issues for discussion there.

Thirdly, and perhaps most important, I want to pick up on the remarks by Ambassador Mine concerning the group of governmental experts on brokering. We would like to do our best to point out the key issues for the planned expert group on brokering. Frankly, I do not agree with Ambassador Mine that the group should set its own agenda. We need to agree on the mandate for the group, just as the mandate for the Group of Governmental Experts on Tracing Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons said, *inter alia*, that it should "examine the feasibility of developing an international instrument to enable States to identify" (resolution 56/24 V, para. 10), *et cetera*. So, too, does it not make sense, among other possibilities — I would emphasize that this is not an exclusive focus — for the brokering group also to examine the feasibility of developing an international instrument in that regard?

If we are to respond as effectively as possible on the important issues of small arms and light weapons reflected in the draft resolution, there would, in our view, be added advantage, real additional benefit, to reflect the points we have previously raised with our Japanese friends and that they in turn, I am sure, have

raised with the other possible sponsors, and which I have raised again in my remarks this afternoon.

Mr. Draganov (Bulgaria): Mr. Chairman, since I am taking the floor for the first time, allow me to express my satisfaction in seeing you presiding over the work of the Committee. I am confident that your experience and strong personality will help the First Committee address the challenging issues on its agenda in a meaningful way.

Bulgaria aligned itself with the statement on conventional weapons made by the representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Union (EU), so I will just make a few points of particular interest to my country.

Allow me, in this regard, to refer to the draft resolution to be presented by the representative of the Netherlands, entitled "National legislation on transfer of arms, military equipment and dual-use goods and technology" (A/C.1/60/L.35). My delegation remains convinced of the continued relevance of this draft resolution in the context of the First Committee agenda. Effective export control is essential in preventing proliferation activities and in maintaining international peace and security. We see this initiative also as a complementary effort to the measures envisaged in Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and thus as a further reinforcement of political commitment towards the establishment of effective export control norms in arms and dual-use goods and technologies.

As widely shared experience demonstrates, a sound export control system is dependent on the ability and political will of countries to adopt common norms and principles, and regional cooperation is of paramount importance. Led by this understanding, the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, together with the South Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons and the Bulgarian Centre for the Study of Democracy, organized a regional seminar called "Towards NATO and the EU: Effective export control legislation — lessons learned". The seminar was held in June of this year, and its objective was to share with the rest of the Stability Pact countries the experience Bulgaria has gained in reforming its export control system in the process of Euro-Atlantic integration.

The establishment of a viable national export control system in the area of arms and related goods

cannot have its aim fully achieved without proper regulation of brokering activities. In 2002, with amendments to our law on foreign trade activity in arms and dual-use goods and technologies, the licensing of brokering activities was introduced in Bulgaria. Licensing applies to both national and foreign physical and legal persons. In order for a company or a physical person to conduct brokering activities from and on the territory of the country, a license issued by the competent authorities is required, and it needs to be re-presented with the application for each and every transaction.

My statement is that the problem of illicit brokering activities should be tackled at the global level by ensuring the adoption internationally of common standards regulating intermediary activities. It is my expectation that our deliberations today will contribute to this endeavour.

Mr. Al-Anbaki (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): I will briefly state the position of my country on two important issues: the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

My country attaches great importance to the issue of small arms and light weapons, particularly in the circumstances my country is now facing, involving the use by terrorist groups of many types of small arms and light weapons and the proliferation of the illicit trade in those arms, all of which seriously endangers the security of the country and its people. Iraq supports all regional and international efforts aimed at eradicating the illicit trade in those destructive small arms and light weapons.

My delegation believes that a large part of the responsibility for eradicating illicit trafficking lies with the countries that produce and export such weapons; they have the responsibility to end this dangerous scourge, which is prejudicial to the security of countries and peoples. This should lead all parties to seek a legally binding instrument to eliminate illicit trafficking. That is why we call for positive participation in the Review Conference to be held in June 2006. In that connection, we have participated in League of Arab States conferences on combating illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and in the Algiers regional conference on the implementation of

the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms, hosted by the fraternal Government of Algeria from 11 to 15 April 2005.

Iraq joins others in supporting commitment to and the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. That instrument has the humanitarian aim of eradicating the threat posed by mines and assisting the victims of those weapons. As members know, my country endures the danger of huge numbers of landmines and other remnants of war, which are the legacy of three decades of war and conflict. We therefore have an enormous interest in adhering to the Convention, which we are currently considering. At the end of 2003 we set up a national committee for mine affairs, with the authority to follow up the issue of demining in Iraq. My country sent a high-level observer delegation to the Nairobi Summit on a Mine-free World, held from 29 November to 3 December 2004, and participated in the work of the Standing Committees of the Mine Ban Convention, which met in Geneva from 13 to 17 June 2005.

Mr. Mine (Japan): I apologize for taking the floor for a second time on this issue, but this is an important opportunity to exchange views on significant items. I would like to thank Ambassador Freeman for giving us his comments on some of the points I mentioned in my previous statement.

I would just like to know if it would be possible to get some indication from other countries on the issues we have discussed, and particularly on the three points we addressed. Certainly, I understand that it is not possible to reach any definite conclusions at this meeting, because delegations are not always prepared and may not have received enough information beforehand. Obviously it would be somewhat difficult. But, if possible, I would like to get the reactions of other countries. I think that would be very helpful to further this exercise.

The Chairman: I propose that we now move to the introduction of draft resolutions and decisions.

I call on the representative of Switzerland to introduce a draft decision on "International instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons" (A/C.1/60/L.55).

Mr. Streuli (Switzerland): In its resolution 58/241 of 23 December 2003, the General Assembly, pursuant to the recommendation of the Group of Governmental Experts on Tracing Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, decided to establish an open-ended working group, to meet in three sessions of two weeks each, to negotiate an international instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons. The Open-ended Working Group, chaired by my colleague, Ambassador Anton Thalmann, concluded its work on 17 June 2005. It was able to reach consensus on a draft international instrument of a political character, and it recommended that the draft instrument annexed to its report (A/60/88) be adopted by the General Assembly at its sixtieth session.

Based on that recommendation, Switzerland is taking the floor today to introduce, on behalf of its 57 sponsors, draft decision A/C.1/60/L.55 entitled "International instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons".

The successful conclusion of the negotiations in June was an encouraging milestone in an otherwise rather bleak arms control and disarmament record, marked by recent failures and shortcomings. We therefore hope that a wide cross-regional sponsorship for the draft decision will emerge throughout the coming weeks.

The sole purpose of the decision is the adoption of the draft instrument by the General Assembly at its sixtieth session. Switzerland calls upon all States to adopt the draft instrument by consensus. That would not only reflect the consensus reached by the Open-ended Working Group, but also give a strong signal that all States feel politically bound to implement the instrument. The new draft instrument is the first international agreement negotiated within the framework of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and constitutes a significant step forward in the ongoing efforts to tackle the problems caused by the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons.

The Chairman: I now give the floor to the representative of Austria to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/60/L.56.

Ms. Auer (Austria): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/60/L.56, on implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. This year Austria is sponsoring the draft resolution together with 88 States from all regional groupings, and I am happy to announce that the list of sponsors continues to grow. Moreover, for the first time, all European Union member States are sponsoring this draft resolution.

The draft resolution aims to reflect recent developments relating to the Convention. Hence, in its preamble and in operative paragraph 3, the draft resolution highlights the importance of the Nairobi Summit on a mine-free world and the Nairobi Action Plan adopted there. It also contains provisions that will allow for the proper functioning of the Convention.

I would like to invite all States, once again, to become sponsors of this important draft resolution.

The Chairman: Before adjourning the meeting, I would like to give the floor to Mr. Abe, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs.

Mr. Abe (Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs): I would like to invite delegates to open-ended informal consultations, on preparations for the 2006 Conference to Review Progress in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The consultations will be held on Wednesday, 19 October, at 3.30 p.m. The venue will be announced next week. The consultations are for Member States only and is intended to check the state of preparedness for the January preparatory meeting and the Review Conference to be held in June and July, as well as to elicit any preliminary views of Member States on those preparations.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.